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ABSTRACT

This unit of the Flexible Learning System (FLS) attempts to acquaint adults with children's literature and help them develop guidelines for the selection of books, and methods for planning and facilitating children's experiences with literature. The material is written for persons working with children 4 to 8 years of age. A variety of short articles and activities explore the uses of literature, its importance, and its relationship to self-concept, personal values and personal experiences. Initial criteria for book selection and personalized literature experiences are explored using a wide range of available children's books. The clarification and development of values and criteria and their use in developing lesson plans for literature experiences are examined. Activities involve thought problems, the generation and application of criteria to books and lesson plans, role playing, group discussion experiences with children, and exploration of available literature. The unit is designed for use in a group of adults and includes self-assessment activities. Related FLS units: "Teaching Children to Integrate Language Experiences"; "Analyzing Children's Books from a Chicano Perspective"; "Selecting Children's Books with a Black Perspective." (Author/SB)

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THE FLEXIBLE LEARNING SYSTEM—COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING UNITS FOR ADULTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Enriching Literature Experiences of Children

JoEllyn Taylor
and
the staff of the Early
Childhood Education Program

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San Francisco

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JoEllyn Taylor is a trainer-developer at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, San Francisco, California. Her major area of work is in reading/language education, emphasizing both the student and the teacher levels. She is instrumental in developing teacher education materials and provides workshop training for personnel (directors, program advisors, principals, teachers, teaching assistants) in Project Follow Through's Responsive Education Program, directed by Denis Thoms, Ed.D.

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She holds master's and doctoral degrees from the University of California, Berkeley. Her eleven years of teaching were spent primarily in grades K-3, but also included preschool, a K-6 resource teacher role, and responsibility for staff development. She is active in the International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English.

Her major concern continues to be one of aiding children and adults in the acquisition of language skills, especially reading, in a natural developmental manner, opening doorways to further learning, self-esteem, and the joy of literature. This learning unit, designed to enrich the literature experiences of children, is one part of that endeavor.

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INTRODUCTION

Preface

This learning unit focuses on using children's literature. It is planned for adults who teach or work with children approximately four to eight years of age. All adults who relate to children in school settings can be regarded as models and facilitators, so all will be referred to as "teachers" for these purposes.

By following approximately the same path as the author of this unit, you would be in a good position to feel comfortable with the specific content it offers. Regardless of your agreement-disagreement with the goals of literature and the teaching practices suggested in this unit, the important gain for you is a clarification of your own position. The views expressed here may serve only to help you to take or to strengthen a different stand, but the main goal of the unit is not to teach you one way as the way of using literature. Rather, the goal is to help you consciously to develop your own way, based upon your own well-thought-out reasons.

Your first task will be to fill out the questionnaire and preassessment. This will provide a benchmark prior to the work in this unit, which will offer you, as learner, a way to sample ahead of time the competencies to be developed here.

Overview

"Give children literature," says Dr. Leland Jacobs, well-known in the field of children's literature. This unit is designed to give children literature by helping you to plan story sessions in which the learners participate to a high degree. This is done with the belief that the story content plus the way it is used can aid in the enhancement of a positive self-concept. It is important from the outset that you be aware that there are other ways to use books than the one presented here. You may wish to use a variety of ways over time.

The Introduction section includes activities that remind you of your past experiences with children's literature, as well as provide you with a personal literature experience.

Part I helps you establish workable guidelines for selection of literature for use in a Responsive Program. You will work with a broad range of children's books and will explore resources that may provide you with additional information. You will also examine a variety of possible reasons (your own as well as others) for use or exclusion of any particular book. Model book lists will be begun; they are to be developed in greater detail later for your own use.

In Part II you will explore: (1) your reasons for using literature; (2) the possibilities of literature; and 3) ways to use literature to fulfill its potential for self-enhancement in children. You'll learn four guidelines to aid you in presenting children's literature. The work in this unit will help you understand these guidelines, apply them using predesigned plans, and apply them using self-made plans. This final step asks you to establish for yourself goals and guidelines evolving out of past experiences, as well as out of the work you do in this unit.

Peer learning and teaching will play an important role in the training. Whenever possible, you will be asked to share your ideas and plans frequently with partners or small groups.

Evaluation will take place via self-assessment (and with peers if you choose to do so), with periodic checks on understanding and the postassessment being the instructor's responsibility.

ACTIVITY 1: My own experience with Children's Literature

Close your eyes for a moment and think about what you like about reading stories to children.

Share your ideas with the rest of the group. Use the rest of this page to jot down any notes you may wish.

ACTIVITY 2: A personal experience with Literature

"We cannot give what we do not have." This is an activity that will give you a personal experience with the use of literature. In order that we not just talk about literature experiences, you will now share a literature experience as adults. This activity is intended to help you identify first-hand what literature is for and how such an experience can be meaningful.

1. Let's start with trying to remember your own early experiences at school. Think back to your first day of school. Jot down some notes on what you remember. Use them to share with peers any of the memories and feelings you are willing to, or to just recall them for yourself.

2. Listen to William Saroyan's story, "The First Day of School." As you listen, see if any of the feelings you felt are expressed here. (A copy of the story will be found in the Appendix. It may be used for later reference or for you to read along with the instructor.)

After the Saroyan Story:

3. Own Reactions

   Write down your own general reactions to the story you just shared. How do you feel about it?

   What did you enjoy?

   What did you not enjoy?

4. Discussion

Think over and share in a discussion on the following questions. Take as much time as you like.

Were any of Jim's feelings similar to yours? In what ways?

Did you see any of yourself in the father? In Amy?

If you were Amy, how would you feel about taking Jim to school? Would you do anything differently from what she did?

Have you ever behaved like the teacher in this story? In what way?

Describe the teacher's behavior the way you wish it would have been. How would the story have been different if she had behaved this way?

What would the children have been doing?

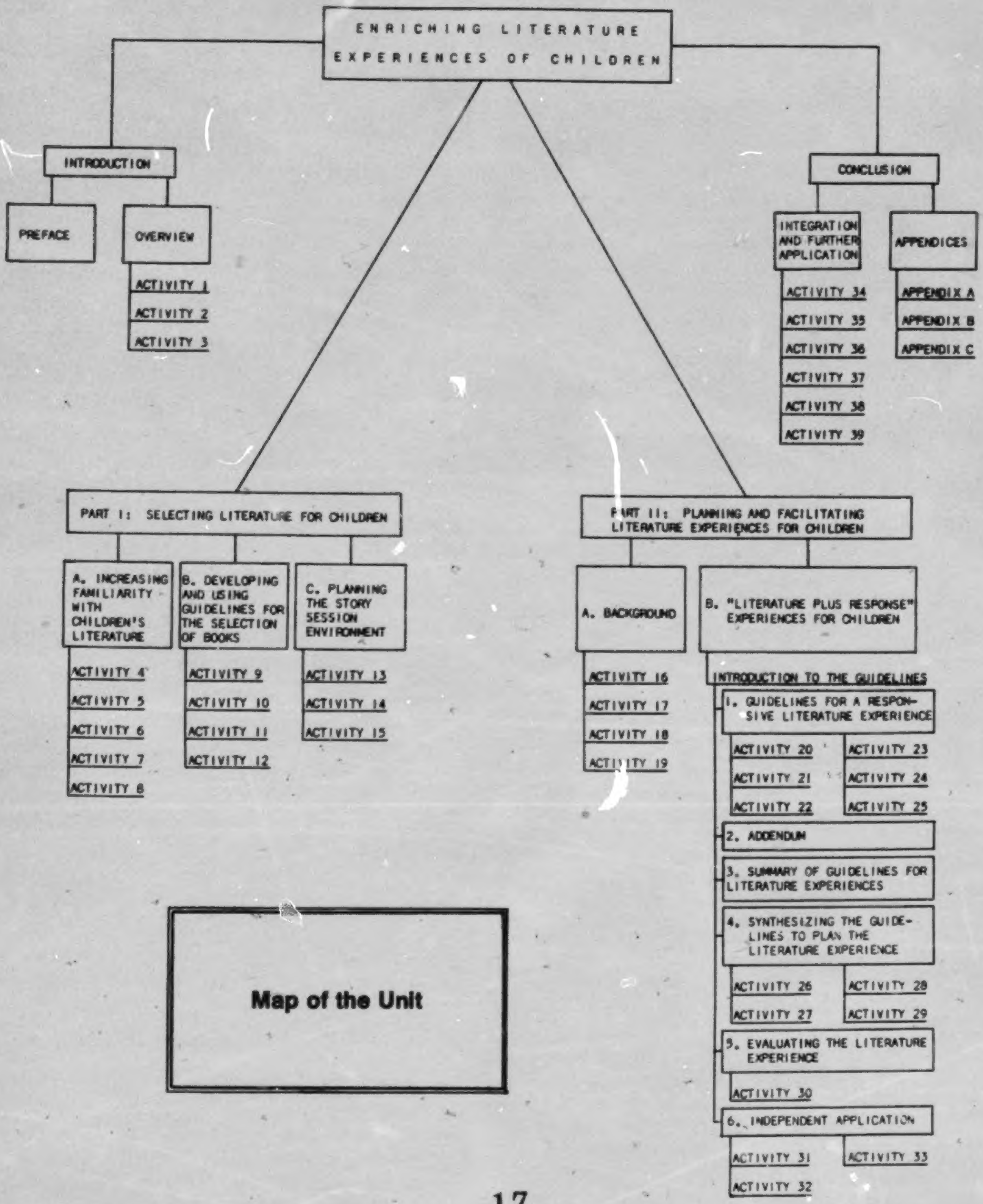
What things might they remember about their experience?

How would you now plan for a first day of school for children?

What would you consider when planning ANY day of school?

5. Rethink your own story of Step I. Has your own story changed after listening to the Saroyan story? In what ways? Write down some of your reactions below:

Assignment: Do Activity 3 before you come to the next session.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Map of the Unit

ACTIVITY 3: Becoming clear about Goals and Expectations for this learning unit

Read the Overview presented in your first group session. Browse through the entire unit briefly. Note especially the specific objectives for both sections of the unit, Part I and Part II. Carefully study the Table of Contents and/or the visual Map of the Unit (opposite page) to get a gestalt of this material. Try to get a good picture of the material to be learned and think about how it relates to you. Summarize your thoughts in answer to the two questions below. This step is very important in your getting maximum benefit for yourself from this experience.

1. This unit is going to be about--

2. I can expect to learn--

PART I: SELECTING LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN

Selecting Literature for Children

This section will aid you in selecting books for children. Four main objectives are emphasized for you as the learner:

1. You'll become more aware of available children's literature and learn of resources to keep yourself informed

   Seeing what is out there--

2. You'll understand a proposed set of guidelines for selecting children's literature

   Learning one way to evaluate books--

3. You'll learn to apply the guidelines to select books for the purposes of this unit

   Using that one way as a model--

4. In order to develop selection guidelines for yourself later

   Settling on guidelines you are most comfortable with--

The material is divided into three parts to accomplish this work:

A. Increasing your familiarity with available books

B. Developing and using guidelines for selection of books

C. Considering the significant factors in the Story-Reading Environment

INCREASING FAMILIARITY WITH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

A. Increasing Familiarity with Children's Literature

Your interest in this learning unit indicates that you probably already have some working knowledge of children's literature. We hope that you will draw upon that knowledge to begin this work, and will be willing to share it with the other participants. You will then be able to add to what you already know and feel about children's books, as well as to learn ways to continue to keep yourself informed of newer publications.

You will be immediately immersed IN books, rather than only talking ABOUT books.

ACTIVITY 4: Recalling favorite Children's Books

Take a few moments to consider what favorite children's books come to your mind, from whatever type of experience you might have had with books. Then do the following:

1. List below some of your favorites:

2. Add one note to each title as to why you like it.

3. Choose your favorite book and be ready to share your comment with the group, if you are willing.

4. Find at least two children (two whom you already know, or get to know in a library) and ask them what books they like and their reasons for their preferences.

TITLE	REASONS

ACTIVITY 5: Getting acquainted with Children's Books

This activity is intended for a group session. If you are unable to participate in such a group, it will be necessary to do this activity in a location where there is a generous display of children's books, such as a library or resource center.

1. Keep in mind the following questions as you browse through the books available:
   a. What book(s) do you recognize that you like? Make a list of your FAVORITE TITLES.

   Why do you like it/them?

   Tell about your particular experience with the book(s).

   b. What other books appeal to you?

   What makes them of special interest to you?

   c. Are there any books there that you don't like? Which one(s)? If you're willing, give a reason for your answer.

2. Share your list of Favorite Titles (from your browsing activity) and compare it with the lists of other group members.

3. Keeping in mind that you are evaluating books for use with children, summarize your reasons so far under two columns:

REACTION CHART

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT A BOOK	WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT A BOOK

4. Review the child-stated reasons you and others in this group gained in Activity 4. Have you accounted for all of these in your chart?

Using Literature to Enhance Children's Self-Concepts

The work in this unit progresses toward using literature in a manner conducive to promoting positive self-concepts in children. In addition, it is frequently possible to select the storyline itself on the basis of its relevance to a topic concerning a developing self-concept. This combination of considering self-concept on two counts, the story content and how the story is read or delivered, is believed to offer a potentially even greater impact on the educational lives of children.

It should be clearly understood that the practices to be introduced in Part II are not intended to be used exclusively in every story-reading situation. Furthermore, the suggestions offered in this activity for selecting literature content which also deals with topics relevant to self-concept are not to be regarded as the only "good" reasons or bases for selecting stories. In a Responsive Education Program, however, we hope that these concerns will be kept in mind when such options are available.

It seems appropriate at this point to refer you to another learning unit in this series, Helping Children Develop Healthy Self-Concepts. If that content is not already familiar to you, you can use it to understand in greater depth how adults can become aware of behavior that may or may not enhance a child's positive view of himself or herself.

For our purposes here, we have chosen particular categories in which to suggest book titles that might help to raise issues important to self-esteem. There are many other ways the categories might have been formed. Since this unit is intended only to represent a start in this direction, please consider the categories as general ideas. Later you may label them for yourself or develop completely different larger or smaller categories.

There are presently four major categories and two additional categories that serve quite different but important purposes. The four major categories are:

A. I Can Make a Difference

B. Each of Us Has Worth

C. I Am Like and Yet Different from Others

D. All of Us Have Many Feelings

In order to account for the sheer enjoyment of the language presented in literature, which certainly can also contribute to enhancement of a child's good feelings about himself or herself, another category is added:

E. I Have Fun with Words

To account for the opportunity to engage the learner/listener actively in the act of problem solving via a story plot, we add still another category:

F. I Can Solve a Problem or Riddle

On the following pages you will find examples of each category that are probably familiar to you. If not, your instructor will help you with others.

ACTIVITY 6: Selecting Books using "Potential for enhancing Self-Concept" as an additional guideline for choice

1. Look at several of the books that meet your own standards for what you look for in a book. Select from those books some that you feel could be said to have plots which might be classified in one of the self-concept categories above, or one of your own that you feel is important to positive self-concept development.

Category	Title

Assignment: Do Activity 7 before next session.

A. I Can Make a Difference

A feeling of control over one's own destiny is important to feelings of self-confidence.

	Author	Title
1.	Borack, Barbara	Someone Small
2.	Daugherty, James	Gillespie and the Guards
3.	Hoban, Russell	The Sorely Trying Day
4.	Keats, Ezra Jack	My Dog Is Lost
5.	Keats, Ezra Jack	Goggles
6.	Krauss, Ruth	The Carrot Seed
7.	Lionni, Leo	Swimmy
8.	McGovern, Ann	Stone Soup (folktale)
9.	Schweitzer, Byrd B.	Amigo
10.	Waber, Bernard	A Firefly Named Torchy

B. Each of Us Has Worth

A feeling that one has unique characteristics and contributions to make enhances self self-esteem.

	Author	Title
1.	Anderson, H. C.	The Ugly Duckling
2.	Bishop, Claire	Five Chinese Brothers
3.	Fern, Eugene	Birthday Presents
4.	Fern, Eugene	Pepito
5.	Freeman, Don	Dandelion
6.	Lionni, Leo	Frederick
7.	Matsuno, Masako	Chie and the Sports Day
8.	Rojankovsky, Feodor	So Small
9.	Valens, E.	Wingfin and Topple
10.	Waber, Bernard	You Look Ridiculous
11.	Waber, Bernard	A Firefly Named Torchy
12.	Zolotow, Charlotte	Big Sister and Little Sister

C. I Am Like and Yet Different From Others

A feeling that one has many characteristics in common with other people is reassuring; the feeling that one's unique characteristics are desirable and enriching to the whole, aid a self-concept beneficial to self and others.

Author	Title
1. Bemelmans, Ludwig	Madeline
2. Fern, Eugene	Pepito
3. Harris, Isobel	Little Boy Brown
4. Kravetz, Nathan	A Horse of Another Color
5. Kuskin, Karla	Just Like Everyone Else
6. Leaf, Munro	The Story of Ferdinand
7. Lionni, Leo	Fish Is Fish
8. Lionni, Leo	Little Blue and Little Yellow
9. Ness, Evaline	Exactly Alike
10. Valens, E.	Wingfin and Topple

D. All of Us Have Many Feelings

A recognition and acceptance of a wide range of emotions and their appropriate expression are important to a healthy self-concept.

	Author	Title
1.	Bennett, Rainey	The Temper Tantrum Book
2.	Brown, Margaret W.	The Dead Bird
3.	Charters, Jane	The General
4.	Cohen, Miriam	Best Friends
5.	Cohen, Miriam	Will I Have a Friend?
6.	Hirsch, Marilyn	The Pink Suit
7.	Hitle, Kathryn	Boy, Was I Mad!
8.	Hoban, Russell	Tom and the Two Handles
9.	Kraus, Robert	Whose Mouse Are You?
10.	Matsuno, Masako	A Pair of Red Clogs
11.	Monsarrat, Nicholas	The Pillow Fight
12.	Ness, Evaline	Sam Bangs and Moonshine
13.	Pesin, Alan and Harry	My Little Brother Gets Away with Murder!
14.	Sendak, Maurice	Let's Be Enemies
15.	Sendak, Maurice	Where the Wild Things Are
16.	Steptoe, John	Stevie
17.	Wells, Rosemary	Noisy Nora
18.	Yashima, Taro	Crow Boy
19.	Zolotow, Charlotte	Janey
20.	Zolotow, Charlotte	My Friend John

E. Joy Of Language

An enjoyment of the pleasure of words is important to an appreciation of literature, as is increasing one's confidence about one's own language competence (a significant aspect of self-concept).

Author	Title
1. Bonne, Rose and Mills, Alan	I Know an Old Lady
2. Brown, Margaret	Four Fur Feet
3. Emberley, Barbara	One Wide River to Cross
4. Grifalconi, Ann	City Rhythms
5. Langstaff, John	Over in the Meadow
6. O'Neil, Mary	Hailstones and Halibut Bones
7. Parish, Peggy	Amelia Bedelia

F. Problem Solving In Story Form

A feeling that one is a good problem solver and thinker contributes to one's self-confidence in coping with day-to-day small and large concerns.

Author	Title
1. Brown, Margaret W.	Four Fur Feet
2. Hoban, Tana	Look Again
3. Knight, Hilary	Where's Wallace?
4. Shaw, Charles G.	It Looked Like Spilt Milk

ACTIVITY 7: Clarifying reasons for preferences and learning about resources

A. From a large collection of children's books (public library or other resources), select 3-5 that fit some or most of your reasons for why you like a book and that might have helpful plots to enhance self-esteem. Make arrangements to bring them to the next session.

1. List the titles here and jot down which of your guidelines each one meets (or refer to each by number or letter from page 15).

2. Are these books old favorites or did you discover them in this activity?

3. What were some reasons you rejected others?

B. While you are at the library or resource center, try to find out some good ways to keep yourself up-to-date regarding newly published children's books.

List below the resources you discover in this search.

Add to the above list any other resources you have used in the past.

Bring the results of the two portions (A and B) of this activity to the next group session. Prepare Part B as a written list to submit to one group member who will serve as recorder.

ACTIVITY 8: Summing up Ideas of Book selection

Submit your written list for Part B, Activity 7, to the group member designated as recorder.

With partners, share and discuss the 3-5 books you selected and brought for Activity 5.

1. Tell about each book and why you especially chose it in preference to others.

2. Tell why you rejected other books that you browsed through.

3. After the group discussion, which may result in additions to or modifications in your thinking, refer back to Activity 5 and supplement your two lists:

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT A BOOK	WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT A BOOK

DEVELOPING AND USING GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF BOOKS

B. Developing and Using Guidelines for the Selection of Books

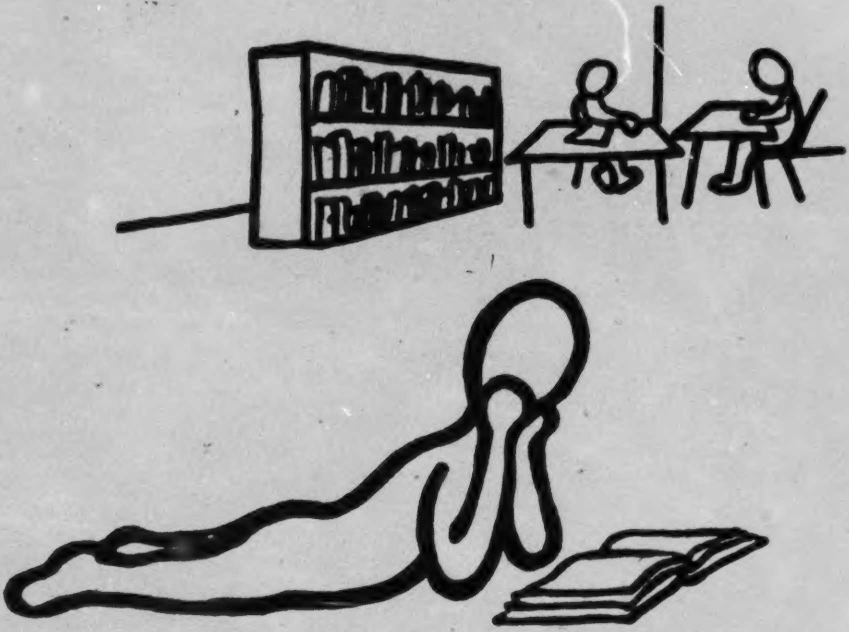
There are many different ways to evaluate a book for use with young children. It is apparent that the specific purpose for using a particular book has a great deal to do with the development of evaluation guidelines. In this learning unit, we will model the development and use of one general type of evaluation in order to aid your own thinking so that you may move toward developing your own guidelines for choosing books.

In the previous section, you have already laid the groundwork for some informal guidelines. You have established "What You Like" and "Don't Like" in children's books. This is a beginning. In this section, you will use this information to develop a rough draft of your own set of guidelines. Further, you will become familiar with the set of guidelines developed by the author of this unit. You will practice using these guidelines in a number of situations. We hope that this activity will provide an experience that will help you develop your own guidelines for evaluating books in the future.

The objectives for this section are to:

1. Understand the development of a set of guidelines for selecting books for children.

2. Use the set of selection guidelines in evaluating books.



ACTIVITY 9: Developing Guidelines for choosing Books

Refer to your Reaction Chart on "What I Like" and "What I Don't Like." In a small group (or partner, if you prefer), look at all the items with the idea of grouping them into categories so that they will be more manageable.

1. Look at just the What I Do Like items:

   a. How might these items be grouped into sets of similar items? This grouping may result in several different versions, since a variety of categorizations are possible.

   b. Now look at the What I Don't Like items and, by changing each item to a positive statement, check to see which are not already included among your "I Like" items. Add these to the categories you have made, or make new groups (if necessary) to incorporate these items.

Assignment: Read Activity 10 and its attached material before the next group session.

In the previous task you were able to see for yourself the difficulties in arriving at priority concerns, in choosing precise wording to label categories or items in an easily understood manner, etc. The same problems were encountered by the author of this unit in setting up the guidelines for the books to be used for the purposes of this unit. You will probably need to do some work with this set so that you will be able to "translate" it into terms that make sense and are useful for you.

This particular set of guidelines was designed to select books to be used for a self-enhancing experience, which includes a high level of personal involvement on the part of individual learners. Guidelines designed to select books for other purposes would, of course, be different.

ACTIVITY 10: Learning the "Literature Plus Response" guidelines of this unit

This activity will help you learn the guidelines in a more meaningful manner by using them with a story you can refer to. Do the following activities:

1. Read one book: My Dog Is Lost, Ugly Duckling, Swimmy or Rosie's Walk.
2. Working with a partner, go over Literature Selection Guidelines beginning on the next page. Work through the explanations of each of the guidelines and the rating system (Yes, Partial, No), as spelled out on the following pages. Discuss each section with your partner until you are satisfied with your understanding.
3. Use the guidelines and rate the story you are working with. (Use blank form and check one box for each item.)
4. Compare your ratings with the examples we have given, if you wish. (They are found on pages following the complete explanation of the Selection Guidelines.)

   Note: You may differ with our rating of a particular book, but that is to be expected in a subjective system such as this. A good exercise for you, then, would be to present the reasons why you would rate the story differently, just as we had to initially.
5. List any questions you still may have regarding the guidelines as a whole, or any one part.

   (Section III of the Selection Guidelines is for reference only at this point, since actual pupils are not involved. Think of the activity as it would relate to pupils you know, however.)

Introduction to the Selection Guidelines Presented in this Unit

By referring to the form itself (found on the next page), you can see that three major categories are used. The Story, The Presentation, and Relevance to Students. Important questions in each of these areas are listed below. When evaluating a book, you should ask each of those questions and decide whether your answer would be Yes (it does fulfill that requirement in general) or No (it does not fulfill that requirement, or it fulfills that requirement to some degree or partially).

The explanations and examples following the form should serve to clarify the precise meaning of each of the questions. Since we all use terms in different ways and for different purposes, it will be important that you read all the examples and explanations and talk them over with others to get a command of the use of this evaluation form. It is not intended to be self-explanatory.

Title: ______________________________

Author: _____________________________

Guidelines for Selecting Literature for "Literature Plus Response" Sessions

I. The Story

	Yes	Partial	No
A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?			
B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?			
C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally in the story?			
D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?			

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation

A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?			
B. Do the illustrations* play an appropriate and important role?			
C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?			

III. Relevance to My Students

A.			
B.			
C.			

*Picture books only.

I. The Story

A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?

Whether the plot is real or fanciful, the happenings can be explained by conditions and circumstances within this setting and within the realm of the characters portrayed. The story hangs together.

Examples:

Positive - All events revolve around the basic wish of wanting to be someone else.

Negative - Some events are based on that wish (trying out roles) but other happenings just seem to occur "out of the blue."

B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?

The actions of a character appear logical on the basis of whom he/she represents. The portrayal has internal consistency and integrity. The story situations are appropriate to the age(s) and reference group(s) involved.

Examples:

Positive - Minority-group members dress and behave in a manner representative of their group.

Negative - Minority-group members either behave in a stereotypic way (Mexican-Americans taking a siesta) or appear and act in a traditional Anglo-Saxon fashion.

C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally?

The ideas presented are "large" ideas about mankind that go beyond this setting and speak to the broader experience of human beings in general. The message is relevant to all humans regardless of the literal representation here. This element is sometimes referred to as the theme.

The theme is developed as a thread running through the entire story, rather than being sprung suddenly at one point. It meshes with the plot, so the writing is tightly knit rather than two-stranded. The theme is expressed or depicted gently and in a natural story-telling manner, rather than bluntly or as blunt preaching.

Examples:

Positive - The underlying message of the story is important to all people; e.g., all people have feelings and have a variety of ways to express them.

Negative - Either there is no prevailing message that we would care to pass on to children, or it is presented in such a manner as to be resented by children; e.g., "You should tell the truth," "You must keep your promise," etc.

D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?

The author depicts all reference groups in an equally favorable way. Stereotypes are avoided and the concept of cultural pluralism is promoted, or at least not violated. The story enhances the respect for self and the others in one's world.

Examples:

Positive - Female characters are seen in a wide variety of activities; several different kinds of living situations are shown.

Negative - Females are seen only in domestic activities; all people seem to live in suburban tract-like settings.

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation

A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?

The degree of formal or informal language seems to fit the story. The choice of vocabulary, use of narrative, and dialogue enhance the development of the plot. The length of clauses and sentences help convey the mood. The total effect is one of appropriate language with an obvious intent to model competence in use of language. It also is expressed appropriately for the age of the expected listener. (This is not to be confused with their knowing the vocabulary items. They need not know the terms, but can learn them through a story that speaks in a way children can relate to.)

Examples:

Positive - When there is a great deal of action, the story is in dialogue form, phrased as people would actually talk; it moves rapidly.

Negative - For simple childlike, fast-moving actions, lengthy descriptive narrative phrases tend to lose the listeners' attention. Also, a newspaper style, for instance, would not be appropriate for telling an animal story for four- to eight-year-old children.

B. Do the illustrations play an appropriate and important role?

The illustrations occur on the same page on which that part of the story is being told. They accurately depict the actions and characters as described in the text. They are considered an integral part of the author's telling of the story. They provide the other half of the message and are not only helpful, but important.

Examples:

Positive - The illustrations portray an accurate version of the story; they add life to the events and characters.

Negative - The illustrations depict the characters differently from what one expects from the text and show decidedly more or less action than the text reports.

C. Does the overall format enhance the story?

The size of the page, the layout design, and size of print help to tell the story. The use or lack of color and other visual techniques enhance the presentation.

Examples:

Positive - The placement of the words around the page helps to convey a traveling mood, or photographs help to convey a real-world feeling.

Negative - The pictures are too small for young children to see and appreciate the detail, or the pages are so cluttered with unnecessary detail that they appear confusing.

III. Relevance to My Students

The major questions remains: Is this book relevant to my children? If, upon a first reading, a particular book does not appear to speak to any of the interests, experiences, or concerns of the children you teach, the chances are that you will not test that book against the items described above. If it does initially appear worthy, and also meets most of the selection guidelines appropriate to that book, then you must decide whether you are going to use it.

Before answering the question of relevance, you should focus on the actual meaning of relevance. Accurately defined, this term means pertinent, germane, applicable, apropos. A story is relevant if it conveys ideas that are pertinent to certain children. We often interpret this to mean that the story must be about people and places with which the child is familiar from firsthand experience. If a teacher were just getting to know a particular group of children and was not sure what interested them and what their attitudes toward literature was, he or she would probably strive for this concrete or literal level of relevance. Until the children had begun to associate positive expectations with a literature experience, and until the teacher knew what topics of interest could permeate across the group, he or she would read books (1) that they especially asked for because they knew them from before, and (2) that he or she believed would reflect their particular cultural experience.

This is not the only way to look at relevance, however, The other level pertains to generalizing across people who share human characteristics, beyond the differences. A story such as Madeline takes place in France in a setting very different from the home environment of American children. Despite the basic difference in story locale, all children can potentially identify with the individualistic behavior of Madeline and her conflict with conforming behavior. In these terms, it would be difficult to label a story relevant or irrelevant. It is more a matter of the way or ways a given story is relevant or not relevant. Weighing the question in light of the contrasting responses would aid the decision of use. It is also difficult to judge relevancy in such general terms. Relevancy does not signify just cultural relevancy, or any other one type of pertinence. Perhaps the questions below will be helpful in selecting stories as to their relevance to the particular children you have in mind.

In what way do you feel this book is relevant to the language maturity of your children?

In what way do you feel it is relevant to the interest(s) of your children?	How is it relevant to the backgrounds of these children?

Other considerations for these particular children:

Question	If satisfied and how
1.	
2.	

These questions should help you determine which aspect of this story are of sufficient significance to place them as A, B, C, etc., under Section III and to rate them Y, P, or N.

Author's Ratings (for your comparison)

Example A: My Dog Is Lost by Ezra Jack Keats

I. The Story

A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?

Yes, the major events (the boy's activities and the eventual resolution) stem logically from the problem itself, and then build upon one another toward the climax. No significant information is left unstated.

Are the events in My Dog Is Lost based on cause/effect relationships?

Y	P	N
✓		

B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?

Evaluating the behaviors and situations in My Dog Is Lost:

Juanito's independent decision and subsequent actions might be considered to be unrealistic for children of that age. It appears unlikely that a child would not first appeal to his own family for aid and advice. Otherwise, the children's actions are simple and straightforward.

Y	P	N
	✓	

C. Do the ideas have universal implications which evolve naturally?

Application to My Dog Is Lost:

Yes, there are universal implications from the central idea that human beings have means by which to communicate with each other regardless of superficial differences or limitations. Our common ground for communication can overcome the ways in which we differ from one another.

Secondly, the theme emerges from the very problem itself, which is the central issue of the entire book. Yet the text never literally states the theme; the resolution of the problem speaks for itself.

Y	P	N
✓		

D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?

Application to My Dog Is Lost:

Though the story demonstrates well how a variety of persons can contribute to the solution of a single problem, those persons were presented in a stereotyped manner in segregated environments. In addition, it was the authority figure of the dominant culture (Caucasian policeman) who solved the problem after all, a fact which did not reinforce the autonomy thought to be advocated from the start. This does not enhance the concept of self of all, and likewise fails to enhance the concept of all others.

Y	P	N
		✓

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation

A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?

Application to My Dog Is Lost:

The use of simple, direct questions seems to fit the age of the characters and the lack of knowledge of English. The very short sentences ("They ran for blocks. They looked everywhere.") feel jerky at times, but resemble much child language with the frequent repetition of the subject.

It does not appear to be language that would be considered to model a creative competence in language use, however.

Y	P	N
	✓	

B. Do the illustrations play an appropriate and important role?

Application to My Dog Is Lost:

There is a good match between the text and the illustrations. The one distracting characteristic is that a red-orange hue is used to represent red as a color. Children often demand accurate renditions of color and object to approximations or inaccuracies.

The illustrations definitely tell half the story. Since the major part of Juanito's success depends upon body language to enlist the help he needs, the full impact of this component is dependent upon the illustrations, which so graphically depict his efforts to communicate.

Y	P	N
✓		

C. Does the overall format enhance the story?

Application to My Dog Is Lost?

Nearly all pictures are of sufficient size to be seen adequately by a small group of children. The use of only one color in addition to black and white is sufficient to convey moods, and is adequate in portraying a degree of realism. The varied size and placement of the print, both that which describes the lost dog and that which denotes the conversations of the friends, convey much more than just the words themselves, but don't change the message.

Y	P	N
✓		

Author's Ratings (for your comparison)

Example B: The Ugly Duckling
by H. C. Anderson

I. The Story

A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?

Yes, the primary events of the story which involve the duckling's behavior and the responses to it, are based on discernible logic.

Y	P	N
✓		

B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent? -

The issue of the personification of animals must be addressed under this item. If the characters are regarded as representative of people, with all the human characteristics shown, yes, they are compatible. If you object to these characteristics being assigned to animals, you would respond negatively. If is our opinion that children respond favorably in identifying with animals in this way, and do not object; in fact, they enjoy the medium. For that reason, we do not find this feature one that would cause us to rate it unfavorably in this regard.

Y	P	N
✓		

C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally?

This is a decided strength of the particular plot. The universal implication about beauty and appropriateness being relative is closely tied to the main character and the main events from beginning to end.

Y	P	N
✓		

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation

A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?

Andersen uses quite sophisticated language patterns throughout this story. Since the amount of text per page and the total length of the story both indicate an audience of some maturity (probably not for most four- to six-year-olds, in a group situation), the sophistication level of the language seems an appropriate medium.

Y	P	N
✓		

B. Do the illustrations play an important role?

The softness and degree of detail in the illustrations appear to match the maturity level of the probable audience (see the comments in II, A).

Y	P	N
✓		

C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?

The overall effect, amount of text per page, placement of text, etc., seem compatible with the maturity level to which this story would appeal. The total size of the book and thus each page could have been increased by about one-third or more, to lend itself better to small- or medium-sized group reading. (This story is available in other editions.) This limitation would lead to assigning a Partial rating on this point.

Y	P	N
	✓	

D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?

This is also a major strength of the book. The fact that the majority of the characters in the story do NOT exhibit a mutually respectful world view, but are later shown to have been narrow in their thinking or lacking in perspective, provides an excellent opportunity for this concept to be discussed. Not only is the issue present, but it is the major thrust.

Y	P	N
✓		

Author's Ratings (for your comparison)

Example C: Swimmy
by Leo Lionni

I. The Story

A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?

The major event of the story is clearly based on a cause/effect relationship since it was Swimmy's answer to survival. The earlier events are more questionable, however. Why Swimmy is a different color and why he should be the only one to survive are not clear, nor is the sequence or choice of underwater creatures he meets in his travels.

Y	P	N
	✓	

B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?

(Refer to The Ugly Duckling, Example B, for a discussion of the personification of animals, which is also pertinent here.) In reality, a large fish would probably not perceive a group of fish to be one large fish; he would still see a group of small fish. However, from the perspective of the small fish (his fantasy, if you will), this is a most creative, feasible solution to the problem, so we would consider it compatible with the perspective that the small fish was to represent.

Y	P	N
✓		

C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally?

Yes, the implication that one can affect one's own destiny and can develop one's own solutions to even the most difficult and crucial of problems is applicable to all people. Also, since it was posed as a problem from the very beginning of the story, a response of some kind was inevitable, so the events centering around this message held together easily and well.

Y	P	N
✓		

D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?

No, this plot creates stereotypes of the "big bad guy" (the tuna) and the "little guy (Swimmy) who outsmarts the big guy" and those who follow along blindly and do what they are told. Though helpful for emphasizing that YOU (one person) CAN make a difference, the story does not enhance one's feelings about different roles and different perspectives.

Y	P	N
		✓

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation

A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?

The language patterns and vocabulary choices are more sophisticated than would be expected in the child's own oral language. However, with such a small amount of text on each page and with such meaningful illustrations, the meaning of "pink palm trees swaying" can be conveyed by all the contextual clues provided. This seems to be an appropriate means of expanding the child's language milieu.

Y	P	N
✓		

B. Do the illustrations play an appropriate and important role?

Yes, the illustrations are of sufficient size, detail, and accuracy to play a very important role in conveying the ideas of the story.

Y	P	N
✓		

C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?

Yes, the total presentation of the story provides an excellent opportunity for a sensitive, well-paced reading of it to result in a very meaningful story session for children.

Y	P	N
✓		

Author's Ratings (for your comparison)

Example D: Rosie's Walk
by Pat Hutchins

I. The Story

A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?

Yes, this is perhaps the major strength of this plot. The cause/effect alternating pattern accounts for all the events of the story.

Y	P	N
✓		

B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?

(Refer to The Ugly Duckling, Example B, for a discussion of the personification of animals, which is pertinent here. The difference lies in the lack of verbal behavior, but the thought processes present are not usually assigned to animals.) Outside of this concern, yes, the animals do behave in a manner compatible with the expected aggressor/prey relationship between these particular animals, as well as emulating a similar relationship between people or groups of people.

Y	P	N
✓		

C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally?

Yes, the basic concept portrayed by the fox's single-tracked purpose, which did not take into account the means of getting there, not only was developed naturally, but WAS the whole of the plot.

Y	P	N
✓		

D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?

No; instead, two distinct stereotypes are perpetuated in the hen and the fox characters. Each shows only one side, with one positive, the other negative. The aggressor is painted as the bad guy, who is, in addition, not too intelligent. These are the same roles upon which slapstick humor is often based.

Y	P	N
		✓

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation

A. Is the language appropriate for the subject matter?

Yes, the simple story line seems quite appropriate for the age of audience this will probably appeal to, and provides an excellent opportunity for functional use of language to denote position (over, under, around, etc.).

Y	P	N
✓		

B. Do the illustrations play an appropriate and important role?

Yes, in this story the illustrations are absolutely necessary in telling the whole story. They are very clear, yet carry a large amount of detail worthy of further examination by the young child.

Y	P	N
✓		

C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?

Yes, the total presentation seems to work together to provide a clear, simple story, easily seen and well-paced. Even the storyline is printed sufficiently large for the child interested in the printed representation.

Y	P	N
✓		

ACTIVITY 11: Use of the "Literature Plus Response" guidelines

In order to gain more experience and familiarity with the guidelines, you should work in a small group. Select books together. The number of books will depend on the size of the group. Preferred size: 3-4 people with 3-4 books. Note that the group must decide ahead of time which particular items will be used for Section III, Relevance to My Students.

1. Working individually, apply the seven major areas of the guidelines to each of the books.
2. Compare ratings and discuss the items together.
3. Note any questions you might still have as a group performing this task.

Assignment: Do Activities 12 and 13 before the next group session.

Title: ____________________

Author: ____________________

Guidelines for Selecting Literature for "Literature Plus Response" Sessions

I. The Story	Yes	Partial	No
A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?			
B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?			
C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally in the story?			
D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?			

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation			
A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?			
B. Do the illustrations* play an appropriate and important role?			
C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?			

III. Relevance to My Students			
A.			
B.			
C.			

Picture books only.

Title: ______________________

Author: ______________________

Guidelines for Selecting Literature for "Literature Plus Response" Sessions

I. The Story

	Yes	Partial	No
A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?			
B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?			
C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally in the story?			
D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?			

II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation

A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?			
B. Do the illustrations* play an appropriate and important role?			
C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?			

III. Relevance to My Students

A.			
B.			
C.			

**Picture books only.*

Title: ____________________

Author: ____________________

Guidelines for Selecting Literature for "Literature Plus Response" Sessions

	Yes	Partial	No
I. The Story			
A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?			
B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?			
C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally in the story?			
D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?			
II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation			
A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?			
B. Do the illustrations* play an appropriate and important role?			
C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?			
III. Relevance to My Students			
A.			
B.			
C.			

**Picture books only.*

Title: ____________________

Author: ____________________

Guidelines for Selecting Literature for "Literature Plus Response" Sessions

	Yes	Partial	No
I. The Story			
A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?			
B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?			
C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally in the story?			
D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?			
II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation			
A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?			
B. Do the illustrations* play an appropriate and important role?			
C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?			
III. Relevance to My Students			
A.			
B.			
C.			

**Picture books only.*

Optional

ACTIVITY 12: Revising the Guidelines for Yourself

To gain maximum use of the guidelines, you should:

1. Review each of the seven guidelines.
2. Review items in your own Reaction Chart, ("Likes" and "Don't Likes").
3. Revise the first seven guidelines so that your own items may be included.
4. Select your own items to use in III.
5. Use the blank form on the following page to write your own final set of guidelines.

Literature Selection Guidelines

I. The Story

A.

B.

C.

D.

II. The Presentation

A.

B.

C.

III.

CONSIDERING THE SIGNIFICANT FACTORS IN THE STORY-READING ENVIRONMENT

Considering Significant Factors in the Story-Reading Environment

Along with selecting an appropriate book for the occasion and the group, you will need to consider the setting in which the story is read. Certain distracting or uncomfortable conditions can ruin an otherwise well-selected and well-presented story.

ACTIVITY 13: Thinking about the Place to read the Story

Answer these questions for yourself before discussing them in a small group at the next session:

1. Which areas(s) of the classroom would you choose for reading a story? Why?

2. What kind of seating arrangement would you strive for?

3. What would you need to consider before choosing a particular time to read a story?

4. What different learner needs might you need to provide for?

5. What other considerations would be important?

ACTIVITY 14: Summarizing your ideas about the Story setting

To share your considerations about a good setting for a story:

1. Organize into small groups of 4-6 people, or another convenient arrangement.

2. Briefly discuss the five questions you have thought about in Activity 13, adding to your notes, if you wish.

ACTIVITY 15: Role-Playing a Story-Reading session

1. Working in the same group as in Activity 14, select one person as reader and locate a very short story for demonstration. Plan together a role-playing situation in which your reader will read in a way you would not want to read to young children. (This is to help you develop What to Do guidelines out of What Not to Do.) Prepare the demonstration and make a list of the guidelines you are demonstrating.

2. Role-play your story to another group(s). They will watch and write down their observations of what you were doing.

3. Now change places, and you observe the role-playing of the other group(s).

4. Compare your lists. Did your group observe every principle they demonstrated? And vice versa?

5. Working together as a combined group, make a final list of What to Do while reading to young children.

Assignment: Read the three Background Articles in the next section (Part II) before the next group session.

PART II: PLANNING AND FACILITATING LITERATURE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN

A. BACKGROUND

Background

This section is considered the major thrust of this learning unit. It is here that you will consider how to use those literature selections you have been evaluating.

Though there are many possibilities for answering the question of how, this unit suggests one that maximizes the learner's opportunity to gain knowledge about himself and his world. The techniques offered here would certainly not be used for every literature experience. Not all literature selections are appropriate for this use, nor would children be receptive to the same format for every story-reading session.

There are other specific uses of literature, also. There will be certain books that are most enjoyed when simply read straight through for the joy of the language. Others are read to deliver very specific information of interest to or need by the listeners. A book about a particular subject area or a holiday selection would fall into this category. Still another use of literature might be to match a story with a particular concern or problem within the group or classroom.

The approach presented in this unit is not intended necessarily to replace any of the above uses, but rather to be added to the repertoire. Some teachers have found it helpful to use all of the proposed techniques with some stories and a part of these suggestions in nearly every story session, but that is a matter of personal choice as well as of student needs and interests.

Rationale

"Come listen to a story."

Most children in early grades are gathered once a day to listen to a story. It's a pleasant time for the most part, where the teacher and the children sit back and passively let the story pour in.

At worst, story time is an activity which uses any book that's handy. It is used as a sugar-coated, quieting influence or as a time-filler. With more planning, the teacher may select a book ahead of time, choosing a story line that coincides with an on-going subject matter unit. The story experience is still rather isolated from the rest of the day's activities, even when children are encouraged to draw pictures of the story after listening.

Is that all there is? Does a teacher have any other responsibility in planning literature experiences for children? An affirmative response comes from several persons in the field of literature.

The story on the page is only one-half of the process. Literature is incomplete without the interaction of the "print with the people." What you gain from an experience is directly affected by what you bring to it; the literature itself cannot be solely responsible for the outcome. As Leland Jacobs says: "The story or poem doesn't entertain you--you entertain the story or poem. The listener, the reader, is the host. He lets the story into his life" (Jacobs, 1971).

We believe that the teacher has a definite responsibility in the choices of literature. The haphazard plucking of any title off the shelf is unlikely to result in the listeners being the most receptive "hosts" to the story. Perhaps teachers need to think about the basis on which they will select books. This unit will help teachers make decisions in this regard.

Once teachers have some basis for this decision making, what will they do with the book(s)? Do they do anything besides merely offering the book? Several authors have written about the power of literature when it is thoughtfully chosen and used for designated purposes. Grande (1965) speaks of literature "as an expression of human strife, conflict, feelings and ideas (which) must engage the student's active response, evoking his fund of intellectual and emotional experience." Various works of Loban (1954), Squire (1956), Lewis (1967), and Russell (1958) have added to the notion that literature can contribute significantly to the development of the human personality, especially when a teacher takes an active position in helping students to interpret literature and relate it to their own lives. This is not to say that the right book at the right time is a sure cure for problems or a recipe for healthy development. But "if a book is properly handled as a teaching device, it has a strong potential as a molder of a child's view of himself and his world" (Chambers, 1971).

A survey of the literature in this regard was done by Taylor (1971). Support of the potential of literature when combined with a skillful teacher to enhance the self was summarized as follows:

1. Since it is a reflection of the society that gives life, literature mirrors, supplements, and extends vicariously the reader's experience base.

2. Literature goes beyond involving the reader as a spectator. Relating the reader's personal experience to the interpretation of literature completes the total process.

3. The involvement of the reader is usually described in terms of the psychological processes called identification, catharsis, and insight. Through these processes the reader can internalize the concepts introduced.

4. This internalization does not take place automatically with most school-age students. A teacher can play an important role in facilitating this internalization.

5. There is evidence that teachers have facilitated

this internalization process under certain conditions:

a. The teacher was open and accepting in attitude.

b. The content provided literary characters with whom the reader could identify (Taylor, 1971).

This unit is designed to deal with two important issues underlying a self-enhancing literature experience: (1) appropriate selection and (2) sensitive use. The selection of literature is dealt with in Part I; Part II covers the use of literature. As stated earlier, Part II forms a major part of this unit because the use of literature in teacher training has received the least attention in the past. Further, when teachers become more competent in the personalizing process of using literature, they will have a fairly firm notion as to how to devise their own selection criteria so that, by resolving the issue of sensitive use of literature, the problem of appropriate selection becomes less critical. In other words, they'll be more than half-way there.

The focus on personalizing a literature experience should not be interpreted as "bibliotherapy." In contrast to the techniques used in bibliotherapy, this unit is not designed to teach persons to analyze children's social-emotional problems and to seek stories that speak to those particular issues. Instead, we are speaking to a much broader set of criteria for "matching" or "making a fit" between books and children (for example: age, interests, cultural group, experiential background, etc.). Further, to be useful in most classrooms the criteria must include relevance for small groups of children, not individuals. For example, although a book about sibling rivalry may be directly pertinent to only a few children, it is used because sibling rivalry is a relevant issue for children in general and not because the story is prescribed for a few children in particular.

Background Reading

The following articles have been carefully selected for their contributions to the subject of using literature experiences for young children. You may read the two articles by yourself, with a partner, or in a small group, taking time after each one to jot down notes on the "Using the Background Information" forms supplied after each article (see sample on the next page). The articles are intended to provoke thought and discussion. That is, your notes may or may not reveal agreement with a particular author. The sample form on the following page provides one example of the type of entry you might make for a given article. The final form following the last article is to be used to write in a synthesis of your ideas after you've completed all the articles and discussed them with at least one other person who is working with you on this unit.

Keep in mind that your two objectives in this section of the unit are to decide (1) why you use literature with children and (2) how you wish to use literature. As you proceed through this section, the thoughts and findings of other authors and your peers should help you to reaffirm, modify, or define your position more clearly.

Using the Background Information

Title of Article ________________________________

Author ________________________ Date ____________

What does literature have to offer?

1. Enjoyment
2. New information on ways to classify children's literature

Additional Notes:

Look for book by M. O'Neil

Article No. 1

Planning the Literature Program for the Elementary School *

Charlotte S. Huck

Elementary school teachers have all but forgotten that the most important reason for teaching boys and girls to read is to help them become readers. Controversies continue to be waged over methods of teaching reading, the most appropriate age for beginning instruction, and machines versus basic materials. Many primary teachers report that they spend over one-half of the total school day on reading instruction alone. Teachers proudly point to the results of reading achievement tests to prove the effectiveness of their teaching. As a nation we take pride in the 98% literacy rate of our population. Recent criticism to the contrary, the majority of the evidence points to the fact that our schools are teaching children the skill of reading. And yet our schools have failed miserably in helping boys and girls develop the habit of reading. In many instances we have developed an illiterate group of literates--adults who know how to read but do not read. In one study, nearly one-half (48%) of the adults in the United States had not read one book during the year. Despite the rising educational level and the high standard of living, a large proportion of the American public expresses little interest in reading.

Although there are many factors which are responsible for the small amount of book reading in the United States, one major factor may well be the overemphasis of the instructional or basic reading program to the neglect of the literature program in the elementary school. We have no literature program in the elementary school when we compare it with our carefully planned developmental programs in reading, spelling, and arithmetic. All our efforts are directed towards teaching children to read--no one seems to be concerned that they do read or what they read.

Few children ever developed a love for reading by reading a basic reader or by progressing from one colored reading card to another.

Teachers and children must not prize the skill of reading as an end in itself; they must see it as a beginning of a lifetime pleasure with books. There are no values in knowing how to read; only values which are derived from reading. As teachers recognize the values

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**Condensed from "Planning the Literature Program for the Elementary School," Charlotte S. Huck. Elementary English, Vol. 39, April 1962, pages 307-313.*

which result from wide and varied reading, they will see the need for a planned literature program in the elementary school.

The first major value of literature is enjoyment. Personal enjoyment of reading is a respectable activity and should be encouraged. Adults read for pleasure and not to produce a book report. Children, too, should discover the joy of just reading for fun. They may want to share their enjoyment in many different ways, but children should not feel that they always have to do something with a book to celebrate its completion.

A wide variety of experiences in interpreting children's literature may deepen children's appreciations, but they should never become the required penalty for reading a book. Alert teachers know when children's needs have been met through reading; they do not ask for tangible verification. One fourth-grader, whose mother had just died, was introduced to Corbett's The Lemonade Trick.

For two days, this fourth-grader was completely absorbed in this book. Once he was observed reading it while he walked to the coat closet. Escapism, yes, but he had found an acceptable way to contain his problem, and in the midst of sorrow, a book had been able to make him laugh.

Personal-social growth may also be influenced by what children read. Probably many of us experienced death and its accompanying feelings of loss and separation as we read of Beth's death in Little Women. American children today may realize some of the personal horrors of war as they identify with Tien Pao in De Jong's The House of Sixty Fathers. Some of our overprotected white children may experience the hurts of prejudice for the first time as they read and identify with Mary Jane, the main character in Dorothy Sterling's fine story by the same name which tells of desegregation in our public schools in the South. Or books may help children with the developmental task of growing-up and fulfilling their adult roles. They discover as they read such books as Nkwala by Edith Lambert Sharp that this is a universal experience, and they identify with the Salish Indian boy whose "childhood itched him like a goatskin robe." Books help children explore living, "to try on" various roles and accept or reject them as they search for their own identity.

Children may satisfy their desire for information and intellectual stimulation through wide reading. Willard Olson has identified what he calls the "seeking behavior" of boys and girls. Certainly this is revealed in children's response to the recent flood of factual books.

Children are hungry for knowledge about the physical and social world in which they live. Many well-written informational books contribute to the thrill of helping children discover specific facts by presenting them clearly and in a meaningful way. These books satisfy, but they do not satiate; they supplement and extend texts in science and social studies. Such fine books as the special edition of Rachel Carson's The Sea Around Us widen children's vision and open new vistas of beauty and mystery.

Only as children are exposed to much fine writing will they develop an appreciation for a well-chosen phrase, rich descriptive prose, or convincing characterization. After a story has been finished, the teacher and children may take time to reread and relish particularly enjoyable words or paragraphs: The beautiful but quiet story of Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen contains many such descriptive phrases.

In Hailstones and Halibut Bones, Mary O'Neil explores the various dimensions of sight, sound, and feeling conveyed by different colors She describes purple as "sort of a great Grandmother to pink" and suggests the "the sound of green is a water-trickle." Her richest contrasts are in her poem, "What Is Black." This delightful book will help children to appreciate fine writing which creates vivid word pictures and describes emotions. One first-grade teacher had read selections from The Lonely Doll, A Friend Is Someone Who Likes You, Bears on Hemlock Mountain, and Love Is a Special Way of Feeling to initiate discussions about love, friendship, sorrow, hate, and fear. Following the discussion on loneliness, a group poem was composed from the children's various contributions.

Books can provide the stimulus for children's writing about their own joys, fears, and problems. Constant exposure to fine writing will be reflected in children's increased skill in their oral and written expression and in their deepened appreciation for truth and beauty.

Another major value of wide and varied reading is that it acquaints children with their literary heritage and provides a firm foundation for future literary experiences. Bruner, in his much discussed little book, The Process of Education, maintains that the basic principles and concepts of each discipline should be identified and taught to children. He suggests that children can grasp the ideas of tragedy and basic human plights as they are represented in myth. Children may become acquainted with various forms of literature as they are read and discussed. They may begin to build appreciation for the well-written biography or for poetry...

Some of our children literally jump from Mother Goose to Tennyson, without ever hearing any of the fine poetry of David McCord, Walter de la Mare, or Eleanore Farjeon. Teachers need not be afraid to introduce such literary terms as anthology, autobiography, or allegory to our modern-day child whose TV vocabulary includes such words as "ammoniated" and "supersonic." Then there is a whole body of children's literature which forms a common background in our culture. Think of the many modern-d[illegible] expressions which have been derived from the field of children's literature.

> He was as mad as a Hatter
> I won't be your man Friday
> He has a Midas touch
> His life is a good Horatio
> Alger story

The period of childhood is limited. If children miss reading or hearing a book at the appropriate age, it is missed forever. No adult catches up on his reading by beginning with Peter Rabbit or Homer Price. There is no one book which must be read by all children, but there is a body of children's literature which is worthy of a solid place in the curriculum.

Finally, the true value of the effects of the literature program for today's children will be seen in the reading habits of adults in 1985.

The explosion of knowledge makes it essential that our children become readers. The natural obsolescence of materials has so increased that adults must become constant readers if they are to stay abreast of new developments. The mark of the informed man is no longer whether he can read or what he has read; it may be based upon what he is currently reading. Our sociologists are predicting amazing increases in the amount of leisure time for the average person. The acid test of the reading program in our schools will be the use which children and adults will make of books in this increased time.

Obviously, these six values of literature will not be fulfilled by an instructional reading program or by a Friday afternoon recreational reading period. As teachers, librarians, and administrators become committed to these values-to the worth of literature in children's lives, they will plan a comprehensive literature program for every elementary school. The planning must start with teachers who read themselves, who enjoy reading and recognize its values for them. Their first task will begin with making books, many books and fine books, available for boys and girls. Books are the tools for learning, the very bread of knowledge. Must our children continue to be like Alice at the Mad Hatter's party, prepared to feast at the table of reading with no room and no books?

We must do more than make books available for boys and girls; we will want to create a climate which will encourage wide reading. While visiting schools during Book Week, I observed several classrooms that had small displays of new books on the window sills. I watched and I waited for two whole mornings and I never saw a single child have time to look at or read any one of those books. Like the mathematician counting his stars in The Little Prince, they were too busy with "matters of consequence" to take time to enjoy reading. A planned literature program does take time. It provides time for children to read books of their own choice every day. It allows time for children to share their experiences with literature in many ways. In the planned literature program, time is provided for the daily story hour regardless of the age of the group. For we know that most children's reading ability does not equal their appreciation level until some time in the junior high school. During this daily story hour, the teacher will introduce the various kinds of literature which children might miss otherwise. Certain books need to be savored together in order to heighten children's appreciation. This seems to be particularly true of such fantasy as The Gammage Cup, The Borrowers, and Charlotte's Web. Teachers will not want to read books which children themselves will ordinarily read. It is fun to read a chapter of Henry Huggins, but children will eagerly finish this book themselves once they have been introduced to it. A variety of books should be presented in order to at least expose boys and girls to different types of books. Children in the middle grades go on reading jags--they read series books with the same avidity with which they collect bottle tops. This is characteristic of their developmental patterns and should not be a cause for concern. If fifth-grade girls want to read only horse stories, let them. A lifetime of reading will show a certain balance, but even an adult follows particular reading interests, completely absorbed in biography for a while, or perhaps plunging into theology for the first time, or avidly reading everything which has been written by a newly discovered author. Can't we extend children the same freedom of selection which we allow ourselves?

In planning a literature program, teachers will not only provide for separate times for literature experiences but make wide use of certain trade books to enrich and vitalize learning experiences in all areas of the presentation in their textbook by contrasting it with facts found in other books. Social studies is greatly enriched by the many excellent books about children in different lands, by biography, and by historical fiction, those books which clothe the factual bones of history and make it come alive. Children who read Fritz's The Cabin Faced West or The Courage of Sarah Noble by Dalgleish will have a better understanding of their historical heritage than the children who are limited to a single textbook approach. History, by its very nature, is interpretative. Children need to read books with many different viewpoints in order to become critical asseyors of the contemporary scene. The flood of factual books in science has been gratefully received by children and teachers. Future space pilots can find the most recent information in trade books rather than texts. For example, Beeland and Wells' book, Space Satellite, The Story of the Man-Made Moon, came out in a third edition, three years after its first printing! Very few texts can be that up-to-date. Arithmetic, art, and music may all be enriched through the use of exciting books in children's literature. The day of the single text for all is gone, as many fine books find their rightful place in the curriculum.

The planned literature program will be only as effective as the teachers who make it. This means teachers will have to know children's literature; it means they will want to keep informed of the new developments in the field. A continuing inservice study group might read and review some of the 1500 juvenile titles which come off the press yearly. Some faculty meetings might well be devoted to discussions of the place of children's literature in the curriculum and the development of lifetime reading habits of boys and girls.

Vertical planning of teachers from kindergarten through grade six might result in a guide for a literature program either as an integral part of the total curriculum or as a separate program. Such a guide might include purposes, plans for selection of books, recommended books for reading to children and by children, suggested experiences with literature, and evaluation procedures. Texts in children's literature and such journals as Elementary English, The Horn Book, and School Library Journal should be a part of every school's professional library. Teachers and librarians might prepare recommended buying lists for Christmas and birthday gifts. Lists of books for reading at home could also be prepared, for children who become enthusiatic about books at school will want to continue their reading at home.

Finally, provision should be made for a staff evaluation of the total literature program, values of it, time devoted to it, and the success of the program. Children's reading habits should be evaluated as well as their reading skill. Interest in reading is not as intangible as it may sound; it can be measured, not in terms of how many books boys and girls have read (although that is a part of it), but in terms of the depth of understanding and new insights which they have gained from their wide comparisons of grade-level standings. But teachers, librarians, and parents know if children are reading. This then is the acid test of our literature program--not do children know how to read, but do they read, what do they read, and more important, do they love to read?

This enthusiasm for books doesn't just happen. It results from an effective instructional program which is well balanced by a literature program that has definite purposes and a definite place in the curriculum. It requires a teacher who is dedicated to the values of literature, and it demands that we lift our sights from our basic reading programs in the elementary school to a planned literature program for all!

ACTIVITY 16: Using the Background Information

Title of Article ______________________________

Author ______________________________ Date ______________

What does literature have to offer?

Additional Notes:

Article No. 2

Folklore as a Mirror of Culture *

Alan Dundes

The various forms of folklore (myths, folktales, legends, folksongs, proverbs, riddles, gestures, games, dances, and many others) can provide a vital resource for a teacher who seriously wishes to (1) understand his students better and (2) teach those students more effectively about the world and about the human condition. For folklore is autobiographical ethnography--that is, it is a people's own description of themselves. This is in contrast to other descriptions of that people by social workers, sociologists, political scientists, or anthropologists. It may be that there is distortion in a people's self-image as expressed in that people's songs, proverbs, and the like, but there is often as much, if not more, distortion in the supposedly objective descriptions made by professional social scientists. Moreover, even the distortion in a people's self-image can tell the trained observer something about that people's values. Of all the elements of culture, which are singled out for distortion, for special emphasis?

Folklore as a mirror of culture frequently reveals the areas of special concern. For this reason analyses of collections of folklore can provide a way of seeing another culture from the inside out instead of from the outside in. Whether the other culture is far from the borders of our country or whether the other culture is lodged within these borders, a world shrunk by modern technological advances demands that education keep pace. We need to know more about Vietnamese worldview; we need to know more about American Negro values.

One of the greatest obstacles impeding a better understanding of Vietnamese, American Negro, or any other culture is what anthropologists term "ethnocentrism." This is the notion, apparently held in some form by all people, that the way we do things is "natural" and "right" whereas the way others do them is "strange," perhaps "unnatural," and maybe even "wrong."

One purpose of studying folklore is to realize the hypothetical premise. Man cannot choose out of all the customs in the world until he knows what these customs are. Traditional customs are part of folklore. Obviously the point in collecting, classifying, and analyzing the customs and other forms of folklore is not necessarily to allow the investigator to choose a way of life other than his own. Rather, by identifying the similarities, one has convincing data which can effectively be used to promote international understand-

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Condensed from "Folklore as a Mirror of Culture," Alan Dundes. Elementary English, Vol. 46, No. 4, April 1962, pages 471-482.

ing. If only the Turks and Greeks realized that they had the same folktales and the same lovable wise fool in many of these tales. The same holds for the Arabs and the Jews. In this light, it is sad to think that folklore, instead of being used as a constructive force for internationalism, has all too frequently been the tool of excessive nationalism.

The history of folklore studies reveals that folklorists in many different countries have often been inspired by the desire to preserve their national heritage. The Grimms, for example, imbued with nationalism and romanticism, and armed with the fashionable methodology of historical reconstruction, collected folktales and legends with the hope of rescuing something un-German, that is, something truly Teutonic, before it faded from the scene altogether. The Grimms were surprised and probably more than a little disappointed when they' discovered that many of their "Teutonic" tales had almost exact analogues in other European countries. The Grimms, incidentally, like most nineteenth-century collectors, rewrote the folklore they collected. This retouching of oral tales continues today in the children's literature field where reconstructed, reconstituted stories written in accordance with written, not oral, conventions are palmed off as genuine folktales.

The basic mistrust of folk materials is part of a general ambivalence about the materials of oral tradition, the materials of the folk. On the one hand, the folk and their products were celebrated as a national treasure of the past; on the other hand, the folk were wrongly identified with the illiterate in a literate society and thus the folk as a concept was identified exclusively with the vulgar and the uneducated. (The folk to a modern folklorist is any group of people who share at least one commom linking factor, e.g., religion, occupation, ethnicity, geographical location, etc., which leads to Jewish folklore, lumberjack folklore, Negro folklore, and California folklore.) The equation of folklore with ignorance has continued. The word folklore itself, considered as an item of folk speech, means fallacy, untruth, error. Think of the phrase, "That's folklore." It is similar to the meaning of "myth" in such phrases as "the myth of folklorist. A myth is but one form or genre of folklore, a form which consists of a sacred narrative explaining how the world and man came to be in their present form. Folklore consists of a variety of genres, most of which are found among all peoples of the earth. Nevertheless, the association of folklore with error (consider "folk" medicine as opposed to "scientific" medicine) has made it difficult for the study of folklore as a discipline to gain academic respectability and has generally discouraged the use and study of folklore by educators.

It is still mistakenly thought that the only people who study folklore are antiquarian types, devotees of ballads no longer sung, and collectors of quaint customs no longer practiced. Folklore in this false view is equated with survivals from an age past, survivals doomed not to survive. Folklore is gradually dying out, we are told. Moreover, since folklore is defined as error, it is thought by some educators to be a good thing that folklore is dying out. In fact, it has been argued that one of the purposes of education is to help stamp out folklore. As man evolves, he leaves folklore behind such that the truly civilized man is conceived to be folkloreless. From this kind of thinking, one can understand why education and folklore have been on opposite sides and also why, when well-meaning educators move into other cultures (e.g., in Africa or in a ghetto school), they actually believe they are doing their students a service by helping to suppress local customs, superstitions, folk speech, and other folkloristic traditions. So African students are taught Shakespeare and Chaucer as great literature while their own superb oral literature is not deemed worthy of classroom treatment, assuming that the western-educated teacher even knows of its existence. How many teachers of literature, of the epic in particular, are aware of the fact that the epic is a living oral form and that epics up to 13,000 lines are now being sung in Yugoslavia, among other places? How many teachers of American Negro children have ever heard of the "dozens" (or "rapping and capping," or "sounding," etc.) or of the "toast," an important Negro folklore genre in rhyme reminiscent of epic form? Yet the technique of verbal dueling known as the "dozens" and the epic toast are extremely viable forms of American Negro folklore. They encapsulate the critical points and problems in Negro family structure and in Negro-white relations. One could teach both literature and social studies from such folkloristic texts (were they not "obscene" by our standards) with the advantage that these texts would be known by the students from their own lives and experience.

Why not teach children about the nature of poetry by examining their own folk poetry: nursery rhymes, jump-rope rhymes, hand-clap rhymes, ball-bouncing rhymes, dandling rhymes, and autograph-book verse among others? There is almost no method or approach found in the study of literature which could not also be applied to folk materials. One could discuss formal features such as metrics, rhyme, alliteration; one could discuss content features such as characterization, motivation, theme. By using the materials of folklore as a point of departure, the educational process may deal with the real world rather than with a world apart from the world in which the students live. With folklore, the classroom becomes a laboratory or forum for a consideration of "real life" as it is experienced and perceived by those being educated.

One technique which can immediately show children something important about the nature of oral tradition is to select one item of folklore and ask each child to tell the other members of the class his version of the items. It doesn't matter what the item is: When Christmas presents are opened (Christmas Eve, Christmas morning, one on Christmas Eve and the rest on Christmas day, etc.) or what one says near the end of Hide and Seek to summon all the other players. Olly, olly oxen free; olly olly ocean free; All ye, all ye 'outs' in free?????; home free all; etc. After a number of versions have been elicited, the students should be able to see that despite considerable diversity, there is also considerable uniformity. If there are differences--such as how many candles are placed on the birthday cake, even these differences are traditional. How many children believe that the number of candles left burning after the attempt to blow them out signifies the number of children one will have? How many believe the number left burning signifies the number of years to pass before one's wish comes true? Through such devices, children can learn that there are frequently subtraditions within traditions. Then the teacher may ask the children, "which version is the right one?" Normally, there will be extended debate on this, individual students championing their own individual versions, perhaps pointing to statistical evidence available within the classroom to support one version over another. Gradually, the children will come to realize that, in folklore as in life, there is often no one correct or right version. One traditional version is just as traditional as another version. Isn't this a marvelous way of showing what ethnocentrism is: people insisting that the way they know is best and proper while the strange, unfamiliar way is wrong? And isn't this a marvelous way of teaching tolerance? If children can learn that their fellows ways are not "WRONG" but "alternative, equally traditional" ways of doing things, this could be one of the most important lessons they are ever likely to learn.

Having illustrated the nature of variation in folklore, the teacher might wish to discuss why there is variation. Here the difference between oral and written (or printed) traditions is crucial. Folkore is passed on by means of person-to-person contact. And an item of folklore may be changed by different individuals in accordance with their own individual needs, the demands of a particular social context (the make-up of the audience--boys and girls, just boys, children and grown-ups, etc.), or the requirements of a new age. So it is that each item of folklore is passed on through time, sometimes remaining the same, sometimes changing. This is in marked contrast to the products of written tradition. If one reads a play of Shakespeare or a novel of James Joyce today, one can be reasonably sure that one hundred years from now, the identical text will be read by others.

There is a tendency to underestimate the difference between a visual/written record and an aural/oral record. It has only recently been suggested that the mass media, radio, television, motion pictures, etc., have, by discouraging or impinging upon time formerly spent in reading, made us an oral rather than a written culture. Actually, one should say, they have made us an oral culture again. In evolutionary terms, pre-literate society which was orally oriented became literate, but now we have "post-literate" man who is influenced by oral communication once more. Yet the education system has not always kept pace. The traditional emphasis has been upon "reading and writing." What about "speaking"? Oratory, valued so much by oral cultures around the world, has become almost a lost art in literate societies. Interestingly enough, in American Negro culture there is tremendous value placed upon rhetoric as one aspect of style. The "man of words" is highly esteemed and anyone who has heard American Negro preachers use their voices surely recognizes the eloquent power of that oral style.

"Literacy" is still thought by some to be a sine qua non for an individual to be able to vote. The fact that intelligent people all over the world are capable of reaching decisions without anything more than oral communications seems to be overlooked. We tend to trust what is "down in black and white." "Put it in writing," we say; we tend to distrust oral testimony, regarding it as unreliable. We forget that much of what is written down circulated as oral communication first. With such bias in favor of written tradition, it is easy to see why there has been relatively little interest in the study of oral tradition.

But by failing to recognize the differences between oral and written traditions, we do a disservice to ourselves as well as our students. Who has never heard someone give orally an address which was written out in advance? Yet relatively few written works read well aloud. Similarly, students taking written notes from an instructor's free-flowing oral classroom delivery are often dismayed by the sentence fragments, the agreement errors, etc. There are major lexical and stylistic differences between oral and written tradition. Written conventions, when seen on a printed page, may sound stilted when heard in speech. A word or phrase may look right, but sound wrong. But by the same token, a word or phrase which sounds fine may look terrible in print. In oral speech, one can use slang, folk similes (as cool as a cucumber), and folk metaphors (to fly off the handle). In written tradition, these are branded as "clichés" by diligent teachers of English composition. Such teachers warn their students to "avoid cliches." The folklorist would urge that children not be told never to use clichés but rather that they be taught the difference between oral and written traditions and not to confuse the conventions of each. In oral traditions, originality is neither desired or expected. The more traditional (unoriginal) the better. However, in our written tradition, originality is essential. But children cannot avoid clichés. Do they not learn to speak before they learn to read and write? The point is simply that children should not be taught to write as they speak and they should not be taught to speak as they write. The unfortunate confusion of oral and written conventions is one reason why most printed collections of folklore are spurious. They have be[illegible]dited and rewritten to conform [illegible] written rather than oral style. [illegible] expletives, the meaningful p[illegible]es, the stammers, not to mention the eye expressions, the hand movements, and all the other body gestural signals are totally lost in the translation from oral to written books. A useful class excercise might be to have a child tell a joke or legend to his classmates whose task it becomes to write it down. One could then discuss at length just what was "left out" in the written version that had been in the oral version.

In order more fully to understand and utilize folklore, one must have some idea of the functions of folklore. Folklore reflects (and thereby reinforces) the value configurations of the folk, but at the same time folklore provides a sanctioned form of escape from these very same values. In fairy tales, the hero or heroine is inevitably told not to do something; don't look in the secret chamber, don't answer the door, etc. Of course, the protangonist violates the interdiction. He may be punished for his disobedience, but usually he comes out ahead in the end. For example, the hero marries the princess. The escape mechanism is equally obvious in traditional games. On the one hand, educators urge that games be played to teach "teamwork," "cooperation," and "fair play." On the other hand, once in the game, children can compete agressively. One can "steal" the bacon or "capture" the flag of the opposing team. In "King of the Mountain," boys can push rivals off the raft. In adolescent games, such as "Spin the Bottle," "Post Office," or "Padiddle," the rules require the participants to do that which they would very much like to do but which they might not otherwise do. Folklore provides socially sanctioned forms of behavior in which a person may do what can't be done in real life. One is not supposed to push anyone around in real life--at least if one believes the "Golden Rule," but in games one is supposed to take a chair and leave someone else without one to sit on (in "Musical Chairs"). As a young adolescent, one cannot kiss a casual acquaintance without feelings of guilt or hearing cries of derision. Yet in kissing games, one must do so. The folkloristic frame not only permits, but requires, the taboo action and it also thereby relieves the individual from assuming the responsibility (and guilt) for his actions. The individual has no choice; it is a mere spin of the bottle or some other act of chance (such as seeing a car with only one headlight working) which dictates the sexual behavior. In children's games, the drama of real (adult) life is often enacted. Yet neither teacher nor student may be fully aware of just what is involved in a particular game. In much the same way, folk--and social--dances allow for heterosexual body contact in a society which has consistently condemned the body and its domain. The fact that boys can dance with girls, girls can dance with girls, but boys cannot dance with boys in American culture reflects our great fear of homosexuality. This is striking when one recalls that most societies even have men's dances from which women are excluded. Americans remain slaves to a tradition in which the body is seen as dirty, as something to be denied or repressed. Note that we still insist on physical/corporal punishments for intellectual/mental lapses. The body is punished, not the mind, every time a child is struck or spanked!

As a specific example of how folklore functions, let me cite one riddle text. A child comes home from school and at the dinner table asks his parents: "What is black and white and red all over?" The parent, if he's alert and has a good memory, replies: "A newspaper," which in fact is one of the older traditional answers to this riddle. But there are other modern traditional answers. Some of these are: a sunburned zebra, an embarrassed zebra, a zebra with measles, a wounded nun, a bloody integration march, and for the sophisticate: Pravda, The Daily Worker, or The New York Times, which involves an interesting play on the original "newspaper" answer. Now what precisely is going on? What function, if any, does this riddle or the hundreds like it serve? This kind riddle provides an effective mechanism for reversing the normal adult-child relationship in our society. In our society, it is the parent or teacher who knows all the answers and who insists upon proposing difficult if not "impossible" questions to children. However, in the riddle context, either the parent doesn't know the answer to the elephant or little-moron joking question (in which case the child can have the great pleasure of telling him what the answer is) or the parent gives the "wrong" answer (e.g., "newspaper" would be considered "wrong" by the child who has another answer in mind). And aren't there plenty of instances where the child answers an adult's question perfectly well but fails because his answer was not the particular answer the adult desired? Children also use riddles with their peers where a similar function is evident. A child goes one up if he has a riddle which stumps a friend. Many adults use such devices in daily interpersonal rituals.

Literature for Children or Literature of Children

The analysis of the content of children's folklore could help anyone seriously interested in understanding children. I refer specifically to that portion of children's folklore which is performed by children for other children. This is distinct from that portion of children's folklore which consists of materials imposed upon children by parents and teachers. The analysis of the latter kind of children's folklore would probably give more of an insight into parents' and teachers' worldview than the worldview of children. In courses dealing with children's literature, this latter category receives most of the attention. In other words, the emphasis is on "literature of children"! (By "literature of children" I mean their oral literature, their folklore, their traditions, not their little individual written compositions or poems.) This is the same kind of thinking that makes Peace Corps teachers teach Shakespeare and Chaucer to African students instead of utilizing African folktales and proverbs; that is, using some of the "native" literature as the basis for an understanding of the nature of prose and poetry. Educational, as well as foreign, policy is invariably made in accordance with the value system of us, the teacher or the American. Such decisions may be rational from our point of view; they may even prove to be "correct"; but in the majority of cases, these decisions are probably all too often made without sufficient knowledge of the groups we honestly want to help. We tend to think of the "other" people, be they inhabitants of villages in Asia or children in our classroom, as poor little sponges who need to soak up as much of our material as they possibly can.

The phrase "culturally deprived" is a prime example of this faulty kind of thinking. From an anthropological perspective, of course, there can be no such thing as culturally deprived. Culture in anthropological usage refers to the total way of life of a people, and not to a very select group of elitist materials such as opera, the great books, etc. All human beings have culture in general; some people share one culture rather than another. Hopi culture is different from Vietnamese culture. So it is impossible in this sense for any individual to be "culturally deprived"; our minority groups have just as much culture as anybody else. It is another culture, a different culture. To call a minority group "culturally deprived" is a kind of survival of nineteenth-century "white man's burden" thinking. The real question is: Do we want "them"--and "them" could be American Negroes, South Vietnamese, children in our classroom, etc.--to give up their culture and accept our culture in its place, or do we not insist on a melting-pot metaphor with the pot to take on the consistency of the dominant ethos? The "unmelting pot" might be a more apt metaphor. If so, then perhaps we should allow or, better yet, encourage "them" to enjoy, understand, and take pride in their own culture. Obviously, the culture of our children is closer to our adult culture than the culture of a distinct ethnic minority or some population foreign to our culture in general. Nevertheless, the principle in terms of educational philosophy is the same.

> What kinds of things do we see in our children's own folklore?
>
> Teacher, teacher, I declare
> I see so and so's underwear.

We see the child's curiosity about the body and the immediate body covering. The child finds it difficult to accept the adult's apparent rejection of the body and its natural functions.

Symbolism in Folklore

No doubt many people who are unsympathetic to psychology and symbolism may doubt the validity of the above interpretations of children's folklore. Such interpretations, they would argue, are being read into innocent folklore rather than being read out of the folklore. Yet much the same symbolism is contained in the folklore for children as communicated by parents and teachers. It has long been wrongly assumed that folktales--e.g., Grimms' Kinder and Hausmarchen and nursery rhymes--are strictly children's fare. This is not true. These materials were related by adults to other adults as well as children. If adult males have Oedipus complexes, then it is clear why it is they who relate the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. A boy lives alone with his mother, throws beans out of a window at his mother's request, climbs a tall magic beanstalk, hides from the threatening giant in the friendly giant's wife's oven, kills the giant by cutting the giant stalk with an axe which is often helpfully provided by his mother waiting at the foot of the stalk, and finally lives happily ever after with his mother! (Parents, of course, to the infant's eye view of the world appear to be giants!) For women with Electra complexes, it is normally a girl versus a wicked stepmother or witch. Whereas the donor figure in male folktales may be a female (e.g., Jack's mother, the giant's wife), in female folktales the helper may be a male (e.g., the woodsman in "Little Red Riding Hood"), although to be sure sometimes kind father figures help boys and kind mother figures (e.g., fairy godmothers) help girls. In Hansel and Gretel, the children are tempted orally and they nibble at the witch's house. (The children were not given food by their parents.) The witch, like so many cannibalistic villains in fairy tales, intends to employ the infant's first weapon (eating, sucking, biting) by devouring the children. In this tale, the heroine, Gretel, succeeds in duping the witch into being burned up in her own oven. The female-oven symbolism is consistent. In Jack and the Beanstalk, the boy hides in the giant's wife's oven to escape the giant; in Hansel and Gretel, a tale featuring a girl's point of view, the heroine eliminates the female villain by making her enter her own hot oven!

Remember these are part of the children's folklore which is transmitted to children by parents and teachers. I do not necessarily believe that parents are aware of the symbolic content of folklore any more than I believe that children are consciously aware of all the symbolism. Clearly, folklore could not function successfully as an outlet if there were conscious awareness of its being so used. Folklore is collective fantasy and, as fantasy, it depends upon the symbolic system of a given culture. The communication of collective fantasy and symbols is a healthy thing and I would strongly oppose those educators who advocate placing Mother Goose and fairy tales on a high shelf or locked case in the library. Folklore is one way for both adults and children to deal with the crucial problems in their lives. If our folklore sometimes deals with sexuality and the interrelationships among members of a family, then this is obviously something of a problem area in our daily lives. We know that folklore in all cultures tends to cluster around the critical points in the life cycle of the individual (e.g., birth, initiation, marriage, death) and the calendrical cycle of the community (e.g., sowing, harvesting, etc.). In fact, if one collects the folklore of a people and then does a content analysis of that folklore, one is very likely to be able to delineate the principal topics of crisis and anxiety among that people. So if American folklore, both adult and children's folklore, has a sexual element, then we must face the problem reflected in the folklore. Squelching folklore (as if such a thing were really possible) would not help in solving the original problems which generated the collective fantasies in the first place.

Folklore About Teachers

Folklore reflects culture. As a final example, I will briefly mention teacher folklore. The folklore of and about teachers reflects both teachers' attitudes about themselves and students' attitudes about teachers. There are the parodies of teaching methods. An English teacher is explaining to her class how to write a short story: it should have religion, high society, sex, and mystery. Within a few moments a little boy says, "OK, I'm finished." The teacher, surprised at the speed of the boy's composition, asks him to read his short story aloud to the class. "My God," said the duchess, "I'm pregnant! Who did it?" There are also commentaries on teachers who run their classes without any regard for what their students might like or think.

The folklore of teaching includes elementary school teachers, too. For example, there's the story of the elementary school teacher who taught look-say reading. One day, in backing her car out of a parking place on the street, she banged into the car parked behind her. She immediately got out to survey the possible damage, and, looking at her rear fender, she said, "Oh, oh, oh, look, look, look, Damn, Damn, Damn!" Notice the threefold repetition in the punchline. There are three words, each repeated three times. Is this unusual? Certainly not. Three is the ritual number in American folklore. Whether it's three brothers in folktales, three wishes, a minister, a priest, and a rabbi, or the fact that there are frequently three action sequences in jokes and three repetitions of lines in folksongs: John Brown's body lies a moulderin' in the grave, Polly put the kettle on, Lost my partner what'll I do?, etc., the pattern is the same, This pattern is not universal; most American Indian peoples have the ritual number four. Here is yet another illustration of how, by analyzing the folklore, we gain insight into the culture it mirrors. Three is a ritual number not just in American folklore, but in all aspects of American culture: time --past, present, future, space--length, width, depth; and language --good, better, best; etc. This is why we have the three R's (Reading, "Riting and "Rithmetic), Primary, Secondary, and Higher Education, the latter with its three degrees B.A., M.A. and Ph.D., the first of which can be cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude.

Folklore as a subject of study can be most rewarding. It does serve as a mirror of culture and it is a mirror well worth looking into. The teacher who encourages his class to examine their own folklore of a group from another "culture," can give his student as well as himself an educational experience of immeasurable value. We need to use every available means to better understand ourselves and our fellow men. Folklore is one such means, one available for the asking. We are all folk. All one needs to begin such work is people, people to ask and people to listen. Whether an individual asks about their folklore, if he listens, he will learn.

ACTIVITY 17: Using the Background Information

Title of Article ____

Author ______________________________________ Date ______________

What does literature have to offer?

Additional Notes:

Article No. 3

ACTIVITY 18: Your choice of an Article

Individually, or with a partner, choose an article or book chapter to read, relating to basic ideas about using children's literature.

Check with your instructor to verify its contribution to this section of your work. This does not mean it must support any particular point of view, but rather that it should address some of the basic issues in offering literature to children.

Using the Background Information

Title of Article ____

Author ______________________________ Date ______________

What does literature have to offer?

Additional Notes:

ACTIVITY 19: Synthesizing Background Material

In a small group or with a partner, pull together your notes on your Background Information Sheets from the articles you read, plus the knowledge from your own experience, to complete the synthesis form below. If the group is fairly small, you may wish to do this activity as one entire group with your instructor. If the total group is a larger one, share across the larger group as a final summary.

Using the Background Information:
Summary of Articles

What does literature have to offer?

Additional Notes:

B. "LITERATURE PLUS RESPONSE" EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN

Introduction to the Guidelines

The four guidelines to be used in this unit for planning literature experiences are presented here in a brief overview. This concise listing of the guidelines should serve as a handy reference for continued use, plus the longer summary at the end of the section. Each guideline will be discussed as it fits into the whole, by means of:

1. a working definition and explanation;
2. examples as they would appear in a lesson plan with limits and exclusions.

All guidelines will then be demonstrated in the context of a real story selection, with opportunities for you to discuss what responses do or do not qualify for application, along with reasons why.

One reminder is necessary as you begin this section. The techniques advocated and taught here are not presented with the notion that they are the only techniques to use while reading stories to children, nor should they be used with every story that you read to your class. Instead, after completion of this unit, they may be used as you feel them to be appropriate; but they are stressed here because they offer a working base toward a more responsive approach to presentations and training in the use of children's literature.

Since theme identification is a crucial first step in the process, it will occupy the first section.

1. Guidelines for a Responsive Literature Experience

Theme Identification

Getting Ready	Guideline I	- Check important background concepts, ideas
	Guideline II	- State a meaningful purpose for listening
Telling the Story	Guideline III	- Give learners the opportunity to participate in the story by: a. making predictions b. supplying closure c. offering alternatives and explanations
Following Up	Guideline IV	- Guide learners to make applications to their own lives by: a. recalling past experiences b. projecting themselves into new experiences

ACTIVITY 20: Learning the Guidelines

Read the story, Madeline, by Bemelmans. Following the preceding Guidelines for a Responsive Literature Experience, jot notes below about the definitions and/or examples your instructor offers.

Theme

I.

II.

III.

IV.

Assignment:

Begin work on Activities 21-24 before the next group session. At least read all the descriptions.

Theme Identification

It is important to be clear on this issue before proceeding into the application of the guidelines, since the theme is a central point upon which the other factors pivot. A teacher might agree to build background, focus listeners on a question, etc.; but to choose of which background information, and which purpose for listening, knowledge of the theme is necessary. The teacher must determine what she considers to be the story theme that she wishes to convey. Most often this will be the intended message of the author, but perhaps not, in some cases. For example, scan the fable about the fox and the grapes.

> One hot summer's day a fox was strolling through an orchard until he came to a bunch of grapes just ripening on a vine which had been trained over a high branch. "Just the thing to quench my thirst," said he. Drawing back a few steps, he took a run and a jump, and just missed the bunch. Turning round again with a one, two, three, he jumped up, but with no greater success. Again and again he tried after the tempting bite, but at last had to give it up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying: "I am sure they are sour." (Adapted from May Hill Arbuthnot, The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature (Third Edition) Scott, Foresman and Co., Glenview, Illinois, 1968.)

The theme is the message the author was expressing, regardless of the literal characters or situations he used. In this case, the theme is, "It is easy to despise what you cannot get." Or, "When you cannot achieve something, it's simple to say you didn't want it anyway."

The theme may be made even more obvious, if it is first made clear what are not considered possible themes. The theme is not:

a. merely naming or enumerating the characters or main features (e.g., the fox and the grapes);

b. posing the literal problem or key situation (e.g., the trouble a fox had in trying to quench his thirst); or

c. literally summarizing the plot (e.g., how the fox tried to get the grapes and what he did when he failed).

If you want more practice in determining the theme of a story, turn to Appendix C for this purpose, now or whenever you consider it appropriate to tackle such a task.

Clarity on the theme, then, opens the way for decision making on the questions the guidelines are asking. It keeps planning goal-oriented, so that you can avoid lessons that are too long or too cluttered. (This does not imply that the teacher will encourage or permit other discussion spontaneously offered by the children, lest she violate the most basic concerns of this unit--relevancy and personalization. It merely applies to the plan written by the teacher prior to the children's response.)

ACTIVITY 21: Understanding Theme Identification

Summary

In your own words, explain how to identify the theme as if you were telling it to someone outside this group. Give at least one example not given in the text.

ACTIVITY 22-25: Understanding the Guidelines in greater depth

In a small group or with a partner, read the more thorough explanation of each of the guidelines plus theme identification. In each case, you will be asked to summarize the definitions in your own words and to create a new example.

Guideline I

To check the information background of the learners, relative to concepts and ideas essential to the plot

This goal is designed to set the stage for maximum appreciation of and learning from the story, while at the same time respecting and supporting a child's self-image by assuming he has valuable perceptions and information to contribute. The listener is reminded of or introduced to important background information through discussions and/or activities that usually take place before the story, but might occur at other points as well.

The usual emphasis on knowledge of particular units, such as vocabulary items, is not included here, since it is seldom necessary or advisable to introduce such small units of thought prior to the story. If the item is important, the context will aid the listeners in discovering the meaning for themselves.

For example, it is unnecessary to define gigantic prior to presenting the following sentence. "To the little mouse, the hippopotamus looked gigantic! He had never seen anything so big!" The context delivers the meaning in a natural use of language, without artificially calling attention to the word as a separate unit. Pictures also aid this process.

In other words, this guideline is not intended to result in building a dependency relationship similar to "introducing the new words" to a reading group. Illustrations and context should be held responsible for conveying most meaning. This guideline helps learners feel "at home" with the subject, or attach their own handles to it. There should be no sense of, "If I (teacher) don't get you ready, you won't understand this." The goal is to enhance autonomy, not detract from it.

In order to set this stage, the activity or discussion will probably deal literally with the setting, tone, and/or issue of the first event of the story. (Let the author do this job for the subsequent events; you are merely providing the initial climate so the author's power can go to work.) An additional reason for dealing only with immediate happenings is that dipping into a later part of the story, then dropping it only to jump back to the story beginning, is distracting to good learning. Especially helpful are questions with many, rather than single, acceptable correct responses. Allowing all to get involed is a better indicator of where listeners are with the topic.

The following instances demonstrate the application of this guideline. These open-ended type questions will be illustrated.

1. In a story set in a northern climate where the events of the plot are influenced, even determined, by the weather, a crucial background concept for children living in mild climates would be a broadened definition of the concept winter.

   The teacher might begin with, "What do you think of when I say 'winter'?" She would then use what the children presently know about winter to build toward those aspects of winter that they have not yet experienced.

2. In a presentation of a story about a six-year-old child who loses his first tooth, a crucial concept for the children might be understanding about family rituals that center around losing the first set of teeth and recognizing that no ritual can be judged right or wrong, since it can be respected as only one interpretation. The question a teacher might ask in this case is: "Have you, or has someone you know, lost a baby tooth (or whatever term the children use to refer to the first set of teeth)? Is there anything special you then do with the tooth, or expect to happen?" Class discusses various "tooth-losing rituals" to raise awareness of diversity, the teacher contributing additional versions not mentioned.

3. To use a story about any family pattern distinctly different from the dominant style of the listening group, it is important to establish their present notion of "family." An open question such as, "What do you think of when I say the word, 'family'?" can be used. Their present definitions of "family" may then be used or extended for purposes of appreciating the ideas in a particular story.

Each guideline is even more clearly defined by noting the intended exclusions. That is, practices that definitely do not fit with this guideline help to establish the limits. Thus, the following are not within the domain of Guideline I:

a. assumed concepts that are minor or peripheral, therefore of little import, in relation to the primary thrust of the story;

b. concepts that will be developed within the story plot and/or illustrations (we do not need to teach what the story itself can teach);

c. literal definitions irrelevant to this story plot (accurate real-life definitions of things or actions are inappropriate where the thing or action is being used in a different way in the story).

To apply this guideline to the fox and grape fable introduced above, satisying the identification of a concept important to the theme would entail the concept of "thirst." It might surface with a direction like "Think of a time when you have been very thirsty. What would have tasted good to you?" or "How do you feel when you are very thirsty?" This type of question gets listeners to bring to the surface their own experiences with the major sensation of the story, as well as to identify with that feeling and to be ready to empathize with the fox's predicament.

Illustrations of concepts not of adequate significance to highlight in this story would be:

a. "Have you ever become upset when you cannot do something?" This introduces the problem prematurely.

b. "What comes after one? After two? Now, count with me: one, two, three." Though used in the story, the counting is not a concept necessary to the plot itself. This question would be distracting.

c. "Where does a fox live? What does he eat?" Even if natural science knowledge of fox-ness is not known, the story is not dependent upon these concepts. The fox is merely the literal character.

Additional Note:

An optional section entitled "Knowing Your Students" may offer helpful supplementary material for understanding and fulfilling this guideline. Labeled Appendix B, it is found in the last section of the unit.

ACTIVITY 22: Understanding Guideline I

Summary

In your own words, explain Guideline I as if you were explaining it to someone outside your group. Cite at least one example not given in the text.

Guideline II

To state a meaningful purpose for listening

This is sometimes referred to as establishing a mental set, for it is the process whereby the listener gets an investment in the story he is about to hear. It guides him in firming up an expectation or a reason for listening. This process usually takes the form of providing a question or a direction for his search.

"As you listen to this story, see if one of the characters is like you and tell us about it at the end."

"In this story, see if you can figure out why the author named it ____________________________."

"Listen to find out the secret."

At the appropriate time (usually at the end of the story), listeners should be allowed to answer these questions or report on their search. This tactic reinforces the sincere intent of the question. If such follow-up is missing, children learn that adults just ask empty questions to get them to listen to a story.

The question is sometimes a very large question, as large as the theme of the story, and requires a thorough discussion, or even art or drama activities to express it. Other times it will be less complex and can be answered with simple statements.

As with Guideline I, listeners should be able to see the immediate relevancy of the issue raised. If the question is one that will receive no input toward an answer until late in the story, especially with young children, it cannot serve its purpose to pique interest. Frequently, this question will stem from the child's initial image of the story, (the title, the cover, the title-page illustration). If you are not to reveal actual plot information, you must deal very directly with the "givens" prior to reading.

To further define the bounds of Guideline II, setting up a meaningful purpose for listening does not:

a. insult the listener by merely asking a simple question that takes minimal attention and thinking to answer (e.g., "Listen to see what the boy's name is.");

b. provide story content prematurely (e.g., "See if you can tell how Jim will solve his neighborhood problem," before listeners even know of a neighborhood problem);

c. focus on trivial or detailed information (e.g., "Listen to find out when the boy's birthday is.").

Additional cautions are helpful here. It is very important that the questions be in keeping with the age level of the audience. Very young children usually cannot be expected to keep in mind a question that relates only to the latter part of the story, but older children could handle this task. The complexity must also relate to the group's age level and to the particular children involved.

To apply this guideline to the fox and grape fable used above, a meaningful purpose for listening would be to see if the listener has ever felt like the fox in the story. The direction might be similar to, "As you listen to this story, see if you've ever felt the way this fox did on a very hot day."

These would be examples of not fulfilling the guideline appropriately:

a. "Listen to this story to see what trouble the fox had getting grapes." This gives away what the central problem in the story was, not letting the reader gain it in context.

b. "As you listen to this story, see if you can figure out what an orchard is, if you don't already know." Since this is insignificant information, compared to other items, it may result in a distraction, rather than aiding fuller understanding.

c. "Listen to see what the fox did when he couldn't get what he wanted." This not only gives away the problem before the story starts, but sets up a straight factual search that merely requires minimal listening to the literal plot.

ACTIVITY 23: Understanding Guideline II

Summary

In your own words, explain Guideline II as if you were explaining it to someone outside your group. Cite at least one example not given in the text.

Guideline III

To involve the listener sufficiently by aiding the development of a further investment in the plot

Guide the listener to "sit in the author's chair" to make many of the same decisions and choices the author had to make in regard to characterization, plot development, and means of expression. This guideline is implemented through the use of three techniques, as follows: making predictions, supplying closure, and offering alternative solutions and explanations. Sometimes all three major techniques (prediction, closure, and alternative) will be applied to one story. At other times, perhaps only phonic closure will be used throughout a story. The plot and its mode of presentation by the author will have much to do with the use of a particular technique, as well as the adaptation necessary for the specific listening audience. Each will be described below:

A. Making predictions

The listener is asked to guess or hypothesize about upcoming events and consequences from questions such as:

What will happen next?

Where will they go?

How will it end?

B. Supplying closure

The listener is asked to anticipate exact words or ideas that will follow, on the basis of information presented so far, thus "closing the sentence." The teacher reads along right up to the missing link and pauses for the listeners to supply the word(s) and to continue the flow naturally. No questions or special signal is needed. The pause is the signal. Interruption in flow of meaning would distract from the major goals. There are three ways in which the listeners may anticipate the appropriate word(s). That is, within the presented language, on the basis of either semantic (meaning), syntactic (grammar), or phonic (sound) information, as described below. Please notice that many times instances of closure are not pure; that is, one instance may deal with both syntactic and semantic information. They cannot always be separated.

1. Semantic closure: Some ways of reaching closure on the basis of semantic information might be:

a. Anticipation of a recurring word, phrase, sentence, or group of sentences:

"Millions and millions and millions of cats" (Millions of Cats, Wanda Gag)

"And rain makes applesauce" (Rain Makes Applesauce, Julian Scheer)

b. Anticipation of a part or parts of a progressive or cumulative plot:

Little Red Hen--"Who will help me grind the wheat?"

The House That Jack Built

c. Anticipation of word(s) on basis of logic or cause-and-effect relationships:

"The clouds became dark over our heads and it started to (rain)."

"It was so hot that he decided to go to the river for a (swim)."

2. Syntactic closure: Anticipation of grammatical forms such as tense, number, or gender:

   a. Tense: We had to break only one, because all the others were already (broken).

   b. Number: At first we saw only one goose, but soon all the other (geese) came out.

   c. Gender: My father was going to the store, so we went with (him).

3. Phonic closure: Anticipation of word on the basis of the implications about the phonic components:

   a. Rhyming: I sat by the lake

   I looked at the sky

   And as I sat

   A fly went (by)

   (A Fly Went By, M. McClintock)

   b. Alliteration: It was a plump, pink (pig). I saw a black, bug-eyed (beetle).

C. Offering alternative solutions and explanations

The listener is asked to construct other solutions or consequences to problems and situations posed in the story, supported by their own logic or rationale:

What else could she have done?

How else might the story have ended?

We should also mention dealing with the responses made by the children. What does the teacher do with the response? In order to enhance self-concept and encourage inductive thinking, the following means are suggested:

predictions - Verify them in the story, being sure to give credit for all credible ideas regardless of how well they match the author's version.

alternatives - Individual and group evaluation of suggestions as to workability within total context.

closure - Let children's response fill in, if at all possible; if they do not match exact words, add the precise wording only if it is crucial to the story (for example, a rhyming word).

Other forms of closure may be discovered by persons working with these materials. Other means of "sitting in the author's chair" may also be developed through use. The ones discussed above do not exhaust the potential of this concept, but rather serve as a model and a beginning.

Additional clarification may come from acknowledging that the techniques designed to place the listener "in the author's chair" do not:

a. Focus attention on the response itself, that is, value it for its own sake. The asking or waiting process must not distract from the story. If there is no ready response, the teacher should move on naturally or, in the case of closure, supply the author's term.

b. Go outside the immediate story situation. The response is used in no other way than as it occurs in this story, to maintain a meaningful context at all times.

c. Ask for prediction, closure, or explanation where there is no possibility for reasonable prediction (complete nonsense, nonrelated events, or extremely rare words in rhymed endings).

d. Ask for explanation or prediction after it is answered completely in the story, or ask for prediction, closure, or explanation at a point which interferes with thoughtful appreciation of the whole (such as a climactic point).

e. Ask for explanations or alternatives regarding an irrelevant, minor issue or one obviously answered in the text. (This restraint applies less to closure. That is, closure items will often be minor items, but since flow is not interrupted as is done in prediction, this is allowable and is justified by the fact that it is a means to heighten listener involvement.)

The age of the children, their past experience, even their familiarity with the story will affect the degree of use of this guideline. With a very familiar story, older children may enjoy many pauses for closure, since they can be highly successful, whereas predictions would be senseless on repeated content. In contrast, many predictions may be enjoyed by very young children even on familiar content.

To apply this guideline to the fox and grape fable, the three portions will be dealt with separately: prediction, closure, and alternatives or explanations.

Prediction

An appropriate request for listeners to make a prediction would be to follow the line, "He took a run and a jump," with "What do you think happened?" The listener has enough information to make a logical prediction (the jump succeeded or it didn't), and the answer to that question is crucial to the story outcome.

Inappropriate requests would be:

a. "...was strolling through an ..." "What was he strolling through?" There is insufficient information to make such a prediction.

b. "One hot summer's day a..." "A what?" Again there is insufficient information to make this prediction.

c. "I am sure there are..." "What?" Not only is there insufficient information, but this interrupts the flow here toward the climax.

Closure

An appropriate point to pause, inviting listeners to join in and close the sentence, would be: "Turning round again with a one, two, three, he....(jumped..." This is possible to predict accurately or logically.

Inappropriate request would be:

a. "On hot summer's day a fox was..." There is not enough information available yet for a reasonable prediction.

b. "until he came to a bunch of ..." This is misleading, because listeners may think of other items that come in bunches, more obvious than grapes, (e.g., bananas, or even people) in this context.

c. "...nose in the air, saying ..." There is insufficient information here as to where the author is going, but even if the question could be considered appropriate on that count, it would be poor timing, as it interferes with the potential for full appreciation of the climax of the story. The story needs to keep flowing for the listener to remain identified with the character, and to feel the significance of his final statement.

Alternatives/Explanations

An appropriate action or event for which to ask listeners for an alternative behavior or explanation would be: "What else could the fox have done to try to get the grapes?" (alternative) OR "Why did the fox say he believed the grapes were sour?" (explanation).

Inappropriate instances of using this part of the guideline would be:

a. "Why were the grapes on a high branch?" This calls attention to trivial information.

b. "What was the fox trying to reach?" This factual answer is readily available in the text, so it is insulting to ask.

c. "...in the air" "Why was his nose in the air?" This is an inappropriate point for interruption of thought.

ACTIVITY 24: Understanding Guideline III

Summary

In your own words, explain Guideline III as if you were explaining it to someone outside the group. Cite at least one example not given in the text.

Guideline IV

To facilitate the application of the story to the listeners' own lives

The listeners are helped to identify with elements of plot, theme, and/or characterization to:

understand that their own feelings are "human," for broader acceptance of selves and others, and

to empathize with a more expansive experience base than their own and to develop wiser, more satisfying decision-making skills and a feeling of power.

Two means are suggested here to accomplish these ends. The teacher provides opportunities for listeners to:

1. Recall past experiences or conditions in their own lives similar to the ones in the story.

   Listeners then relive their own experiences in some way:

   oral discussion

   symbolic representation in photos, artwork

   role playing

2. Imagine or project themselves into the story.

   Listeners experience the major events and/or feelings represented in the story in some simulated manner:

   role playing

   fantasy

   discussion

   art

This application might occur while the story is being read, but most of the applications require more time so that they would be more appropriate at the end of the story. Again, there might be instances where such activities would be helpful both before and after the story, to see the effect of the story experience. This type of activity should be planned so that it will not interfere in any way with the enjoyment of the story as intended by the author.

It would be necessary to know the particular children to judge if a certain incident could be recalled or would have to be imagined, so for purposes of learning in this unit, the designation must be arbitrary. That would mean that certain of the suggested lessons for fantasy or role playing would be unnecessary for those children who had already lived that particular experience. The opposite might also occur.

A wide range and variety of activities might be included in this guideline. The following suggestions apply to some potential curriculum areas.

Drama

- creative dramatics
- re-enactment
- puppetry
- TV/radio show

Art

- drawing, painting, and other media
- puppets
- other means of replication of characters
- costumes

Oral Language

- retelling the story, or parts of the story
- recalling parallels
- developing alternative action, situations
- reading or telling story into tape for listening or narration

Writing (if appropriate)

- retelling
- developing a script for dramatic use
- developing alternative endings, events, etc.
- writing additional chapters, sequels, and the like
- giving explanations for events and situations

In many cases some of the above suggestions would be combined. It is desirable to involve pupils in a variety of ways, providing for differing interest and abilities and providing for strong commitment to a particularly enjoyable project (e.g., making costumes, developing a play, making props, making invitations, creating ads, presenting the play).

One additional responsibility the teacher has in this regard is to help interested readers/listeners to locate other resources related to the story of current interest. The teacher becomes a cross-reference bank. This involves being knowledgeable about:

a. other books on the same topic

b. other books by the same author

c. books with other types of similarities of interest to the learners (format, illustrations, style, etc.)

This skill, acquired gradually by immersing yourself in children's literature, is most valuable to the children with whom you work. It does not imply that more books are heaped on an individual or group, but that these additional resources are simply made available.

The intention of Guideline IV is to enrich the experience; it is not to:

a. subject learners' experiences or opinions to judgment or analysis;

b. probe beyond what is comfortably offered in a medium comfortable to the learner (productive thinking can be provoked in learners even when they do not choose to share those thoughts publicly);

c. highlight insignificant aspects of the plot.

This guideline is intended to serve as the integrating mechanism to pull together the present literature experience and to find a place for it in each learner's total life experience.

To apply this guideline to the fox and grape fable, the two sections will be treated as one, since it is impossible to determine theoretically whether any response would be past recollection or projection as it relates to any individual learner.

An appropriate means of providing the learners the opportunity to apply this story to their own lives is: "Recall a time or pretend a time when you tried very hard for something you wanted, but even after trying several times, you could not get it. How did/do you feel? ....What did/do you do next?" This is then pursued by offering a variety of means for expressing this feeling (writing, telling, drawing, painting, recording, singing, dramatizing, etc.).

Inappropriate attempts to observe this guideline would be:

a. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you said something with your 'nose in the air.'"

   This would be inappropriate if done in isolation as cited. It could be appropriate if it were directly connected to the "sourgrapes" phenomenon.

b. "Think of or pretend a time when you gave up on something you tried but couldn't do. Then we'll all tell each other what we thought of."

   The basic idea might be all right, but forced sharing is not acceptable, especially when, worded this way, it could lead to thinking about and dwelling on failures. The statement considered appropriate (above) is worded so eventual success is still possible.

c. "Think of a good thing to quench your thirst on a hot day. Then we'll each tell what we thought of and then vote on who had the best idea."

   Not only does this activity begin by stressing an unimportant aspect of the plot (the specific item used to quench thirst but judgment is going to be imposed on each person's idea, implying right/wrong, good/bad, etc.

ACTIVITY 25: Understanding Guideline IV

Summary

In your own words, explain Guideline IV as if you were explaining it to someone not in this group. Cite at least one example not used in the text.

Addendum

A few additional statements are important to classroom use of the guidelines. These speak to use of all the guidelines, and are necessary considerations since violation of these points can result in undesirable adherence to a technique. This enters the "it's-not-what-you-do-but-how-you-do-it" domain.

Try, if you will, then, to stand back from the four guidelines and "sprinkle them with these seasonings" before serving them.

1. Using the known to move to the unknown

   Students are reminded of, or introduced to, concepts via present knowledge gained through prior direct experience. The familiar or known serves as the bridge to the novel or unknown. If the children know about carrots and beets but not about turnips, the similarities and differences among carrots, beets, and turnips can be highlighted to teach the new concept.

2. Inductive questioning

   Formulating the actual questions builds on the above principle. Encourage the learner to take the parts he already has, and then to form the whole for himself. In that way teachers emphasize formulating important questions instead of providing answers. It is best defined in contrast to:

   Didactic telling:
   "This animal is a lion. It has a mane and a tail."

   Rhethorical questioning:
   "This animal is a lion, isn't it? Do you see the mane and the tail?"

Deductive questioning:
"This animal is a lion. Where is the mane? Where is the tail?"

Inductive questioning:
"Do you know a name for this animal? (After a response) Is there something special about a _____ (the name they supply)?"

As used here, inductive questioning implies a much more open-ended process, with no one response considered the solution. The question is set up as a problem, rather than telling learners what is so, or pretending to ask with no intention of receiving real answers. Induction places more responsibility on the learners. They are guided to bring knowledge and experiences to bear on a question.

Both techniques are used in the following example of introducing a story that takes place in a setting with two-story housing:

"When I say 'house,' what do you think of?" Ask for and list all ideas thought of by the group. Children may want to illustrate the different types in some fashion.

If the concept of multiple levels is not mentioned in the children's descriptions, ask, "Have you been in friends' or relatives' houses or apartments where some rooms are downstairs and other rooms are upstairs? If not, think of some stores or offices you have been to where you had to climb stairs to take an elevator or escalator to another floor. Can you picture some rooms on top of other rooms?" Compare to playhouse or pet cage, something in the classroom that has similar characteristics. Examine together the actual item. Maybe one child would like to draw such a house for others to see..."What would be different for you if your family lived in a two-story house, and your bedrooms were upstairs?... The family in this story lived in such a house."

The known-to-unknown principle provides direction as to where a teacher might start with the topic, while inductive questioning guides the actual formulation of the question so the learner is held primarily responsible.

Both strategies say to the learner: You already know a great deal. You are capable of finding out things for yourself. What you already know can help you and others to make new discoveries.

Because the two techniques work closely together, they are not considered mutually exclusive. That is, inductive questions that uncover areas where children lack direct experience point to the need for using comparable "knowns" to bridge the gap. However, if you merely tell the children, "This is a kangaroo," you will not learn:

which children already know of kangaroos, or

which children have no image of kangaroo-ness even when named.

In other words, telling is not teaching. The combination of finding familiar "handles" to which new ideas can be attached and placing half the responsibility on the learner should result in more insignificant learning.

One additional comment is necessary. The foregoing has dealt with teacher questioning, but has not mentioned what to expect or encourage in the way of pupil response. The crucial point is to provide pupils the opportunity to consider the issue(s). From the teacher's standpoint it is helpful, rewarding, and informative to receive the pupil's verbal or other concrete responses to the question or problem. However, for any number of reasons, pupils may not choose to "share" their responses. Even when pupils merely voice their responses to themselves, or discuss the issue with family or peers later, never to be shared with the teacher, there is the potential for gain. Also, pupils gain from hearing the responses of others, even if they do not feel comfortable offering their own. In other words, not all growth can be observed or even known. It has been shown, however, that pupil level of cognitive operation can be significantly influenced by teacher questions. Five-year-olds can relate personal experiences to rather abstract concepts in children's stories, as a direct result of being asked to recall such an experience. In most cases, this personalization does not occur automatically or regularly without guidance for young children.

The other implication of this point is that teacher behavior cannot be judged solely on immediately observable pupil response. Pupils must become comfortable with a situation to utilize it well, so the teacher deserves credit for offering interaction opportunities even if they are not immediately used.

2. Summary of Guidelines for Literature Experiences

Theme Identification

Guideline I

To check appropriate background of the learners, relative to concepts, ideas, and vocabulary items crucial to the plot

The listener is reminded of or introduced to background material important to understanding and appreciating the story.

in the form of:
Inductive question (vs. deductive, telling, or rhetorical questions) --allowing listeners to use their own resources to make discoveries.

Using the known to move to the unknown--relating new concepts to comparable experience and knowledge the listeners already have.

Guideline II

To state a meaningful purpose for listening

The listener has an investment in the story, something he hopes to find out or decide upon as a result of listening.

in the form of:
A verbalized question believed to greatly interest the listener, most commonly posed before the story is read.

Guideline III

To sufficiently involve the listener to more than a passive interest in the plot and its construction

The listener "sits in the author's chair" to make many of the same decisions and choices the author had to make in regard to characterization, plot development, and means of expression.

In the form of:
Making predictions
The listener is asked to hypothesize or guess about upcoming events, consequences, etc.

Supplying closure
The listener is asked to anticipate exact words or ideas to follow, on the basis of information presented thus far, thereby "closing" the sentence. Three types of closure are detailed: semantic, syntactic, and phonic.

Offering alternatives and explanations
The listener is asked to construct other consequences of situations posed in the story or explanations of behaviors, supported by their own logic.

Guideline IV

To facilitate the application of the story to the listeners' own lives

The listeners are helped to identify with elements of plot, theme, and/or characterization.

In the form of:
Recalling similar past experiences in their personal lives.

Projecting or imagining themselves in a new experience.

Further notes:

Guidelines I and II are designed to set the stage for maximum appreciation of and learning from the story, while at the same time respecting and supporting a child's self-image by assuming he has valuable perceptions and information to contribute. They are typically applied before the story is read, but there will be exceptions to this generalization.

Guideline III a. predictions, b. closure, and c. offering alternatives and explanations is typically applied during or as part of the story, giving the listener an active role while listening to the very aspects he/she is being asked to "author."

Guideline IV typically occurs after the story is read, since the story background is necessary for such activities, whereas insertion during the story would often harmfully interrupt the flow of language and ideas.

There will be cases where a particular plot indicates a different sequencing of these guidelines or a deletion of one or more. The stated sequence and use is offered because it is usually applicable.

As a general rule, the greater part of the children's verbal behavior will be encouraged and received before and after the story. There will usually be some listener involvement during the story, but not at the expense of the plot and its form of literary expression. There is usually less verbal involvement at the climax of the story, if it would distract from group interest or the author's intent.

Since any plan must take into account the developmental level of the children, the prior and present classroom experiences, the type of book, and the author's writing style, one needs to balance the best use of the criteria, emphasizing one, eliminating another, etc. The guidelines are not to dictate or limit the potential of these experiences. They are helpful only so long as they serve to aid the planning of rich experiences with literature for children.

It has been mentioned that each guideline is intended to build a habit in the listener, for use independently as a listener to oral language and as a reader of written language. (This parallel is extremely valuable.) This point needs to be brought to the surface repeatedly, since the teacher's role in asking the questions to carry out each guideline should diminish over time. That is children will begin to look at a cover and title, and make their own demands on the story. They will also begin to apply the story ideas readily to their own lives, after this technique has been modeled repeatedly and meaningfully. Continued dependence on teacher facilitation is not desired.

This concept applies even to theme identification at the child level. Rather than isolate the theme as theme, this skill is developed through the application to self (Guideline IV). It is here that the open-ended questions ("Has anything like this happened to you?" or "Think of how else you might have behaved in this story," etc.,) are designed to help children sense the larger message of the story. There does come a time when it is even appropriate to step outside the story after a story-session, and ask, "Why do you think the author wrote this story?" or "What was the author telling us by writing this story?" This can only be done when children are aware of the distinction between stories and real life, and are aware that another person (the author) actually created these ideas on paper. Again, it is not intended to convey an idea that every story is to "teach a lesson" and what the lesson is each time. Instead, it is making a habit of being able to generalize from a literal incident to the broader spectrum of human experience. When the technique is modeled and practiced repeatedly with relevant and important content, adults are frequently amazed at how sophisticated children can become in this regard.

If literature is a mirror of life, we are obligated to facilitate children's seeing themselves in that mirror, and enriching their lives as a result.

3. Synthesizing the Guidelines to Plan the Literature Experience

This section will demonstrate how the four guidelines may be used together to provide a rich, involving, relevant literature experience for children. To help in this modeling process, you follow the same series of steps suggested for teacher planning. In this way, you can familiarize yourself with an organized planning system for the future, while reinforcing and internalizing the content presented. Both have value for the future. They can facilitate discussion of guideline application as well as offer a framework for the eventual use of your own guidelines.

The planning portion of the process includes three steps:

1. reading the story text,
2. recording a variety of pre-planning ideas in all four categories, and
3. creating a detailed lesson plan that considers all four categories.

The procedures involved in carrying out these steps follow:

1. Reading the story text.
   This step is the most obvious. Knowledge of the plot is essential to planning. Even if the teacher is acquainted with the plot on a second-hand basis or from some time ago, the story should be read in its entirety just before planning the lesson, to take note of writing style, format, illustrations, and any other characteristics that will have to be considered in satisfying the guidelines.

   It is also important at this time to become clear about the theme of the story. What is the author's intended message? It may be that this story was selected because the plot or theme coordinate with a broader study or concern taking place in the classroom. In such case, this examination would have already been carried out.

   Story selection should fit into on-going classroom activities and topics, so that the literature experience (storytime) is not an isolated, unrelated portion of the daily program. However, since story selection is the focus of Part I of this unit, those concerns discussed there.

2. Pre-planning for the literature experience.
   This brainstorming phase generates as many ideas as possible that relate to satisfying the four criteria. Form A (page 106) is offered as one format for recording short notes to yourself of potential ideas for questions, activities, and topics for discussion. As a rule, more ideas would appear on this form than would finally appear in the detailed lesson plan.

3. Designing the detailed lesson plan.
   The pre-planning ideas are now evaluated in terms of:

Who are the listeners?

What are the overall goals of the experience so decisions can be made on selecting ideas to develop into practical form?

The ideas then found useful for this particular situation are recorded in very concrete terms on Form B: Lesson Plan (page 107). Questions should be formulated in the specific language the teacher believes appropriate; activities should be specified with materials and procedures listed; discussions should be outlined so major points and emphases are indicated. The result is intended to be a "map" to be followed in presenting this particular book. The starting point, ending point, and intended highlights along the way are made clear.

This is not to say that the map becomes a binding obligation to be fulfilled. The children's responses and spontaneous comments may lead a discussion in a different direction with different follow-up-activities resulting. Such flexibility is advantageous, but possible only when the teacher has already clarified his or her perceptions of the plot and theme potential and has clear objectives. The best spontaneous activity is that which is well-planned. When you really know where you are going, you are in a good position to meet options that occur spontaneously and to evaluate their merit in terms of the desired end result.

ACTIVITY 26: Moving a Pre-Plan into a Lesson Plan

1. Have available a copy of Madeline, by Bemelmans.
2. In a small group, examine Form A: Pre-planning--to see how the author applied the guideline to this story. You will probably want to take the guidelines, one at a time, allowing for referring back to the definitions and explanations in the previous section.
3. Add your own applications to each of the guideline questions. The model is not intended to offer the only answers to all these questions. It merely serves as a starter.
4. Next, examine and discuss how those Pre-Planning ideas become actual questions and activities on Form B: Lesson Plan.
5. Jot notes and questions for your instructor, if desired.

Assignment: Activity 26-27 before the next group session.

Form A: Pre-Planning

Story Title *Madeline*

Jot notes in answer to these questions:

1. What is the theme of the story?

awareness of individuality/conformity

Guideline I

2. What are the important background concepts?

residential living in contrast to traditional family living

Guideline II

3. What are some possible purposes for listening?

Would you choose to be Madeline or the others?

Guideline III

4. In what instances could listeners make predictions?

p. 16 Why is M. crying?
p. 33 What is the surprise?
p. 38 What is not right?
p. 42 Why might all the girls be crying?

5. Listeners supply closure?

Supply rhyming word whenever the illustrations or context makes the final word(s) obvious.

6. Offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Why did the others want operations too?
What if the illness had been measles?

Guideline IV

7. For which experiences shall I ask the children to recall parallel experiences from their lives?

   - appearing to be different from peers
   - wanting something someone else has

8. Into which experiences would it be helpful to have the children project themselves? Role-play M's behavior

   other girls

   Miss Clavel

   Or represent in other Media

Additional notes:

Form B: Lesson Plan

Story Title Madeline

Phrase discussion questions, indicate major points, and when important: indicate media, page/line numbers, activities.

Before the story: "Who do you live with? Where do you go to school? Where do you eat and sleep? Are your school and home the same place?" "Do you know anyplace where children live without parents?" "As you listen to this story called Madeline decide if you would rather be M. or someone else."

During the story:

p.2 straight (lines)
5 went to (bed)
8 very (sad)
11 or (shine)

p14 and (ice)
17 on her (right)
18 were (sad) "Why might she be crying?"

p.23 with (flowers)
25 like a (rabbit)
27 (Madeline)
30 her (door)
31 and a (vase)

p.33 by ten -- "What do you think it will be?"
on her stomach (was a scar)
p.37 and went to (bed)
p.38 on the (light)

p.38 is not right!) What do you think she will finish
42 trembling (you) Why might they be crying
44 said Miss Clavel there's not anyone

After the story: "Who would you like to be M. or someone else? Why?" "What were the *names of the others?" Why do you think all the others wanted operations, too?" Imagine that M. had the measles. What would have happened in the story

*Discuss possibilities as to why author did not name the others (Uniformity/individuality) Role-playing feelings and actions of M., Miss Clavel, others Express in other media, if wish. Through choice of Media, put M. in our world: (on a school bus, at play, shopping, in school, etc.)

ACTIVITY 27: Summarizing the Guidelines

Summary:

In your own words explain all four guidelines as if you were explaining them to someone not in this group. Give at least one new example for each guideline.

I.

II.

III.

IV.

Write the additional conditions necessary to include (from the Addendum).

(You may want to return to this page at a later time and revise your wording or make additions.)

ACTIVITY 28: Taking Credit for Past Knowledge

As mentioned earlier, some or all of the ideas in this learning unit may not be different from what you have done in the past when reading stories to children. You may or may not have planned the particular techniques you have used in the past; you may or may not have been aware of why you practiced a certain behavior. We hope that these activities have increased your awareness of the possibilities and helped you to make those choices consciously.

This activity is designed to help you examine what you brought to this unit from your own experience. You may want to refer to your pre-assessment work, especially the performance tape you did for yourself, in order to give this task sufficient attention.

Beside the numeral for each of the four guidelines, write any behavior you have already practiced in the past that you would consider to be a satisfaction of that guideline:

I. (Background concepts)

II. (Listening purpose)

III. (Prediction)

(Closure)

IV. (Recall experiences)

(Alternatives)

(Project into experiences)

ACTIVITY 29: Developing a Complete Lesson plan

To appreciate and understand the use of all guidelines in presenting a story selection to children, you need to apply them to a total story unit as soon as possible. To this end, The Turnip, a folktale, by Janina Domanska will be used. After you have enjoyed the story, you can see how a plan can be made for presentation.

1) Read The Turnip story.

2) Complete Pre-Planning, Form A.

3) Complete the Lesson Plan, Form B.

Work with a partner or in a small group, as desired, discussing each phase of the task.

Form A: Pre-Planning

Story Title ____________________

Jot notes in answer to these questions:

1. What is the theme of the story?

Guideline I

2. What are the important background concepts?

Guideline II

3. What are some possible purposes for listening?

Guideline III

4. In what instances could listeners make predictions?

5. Listeners supply closure?

6. Offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

7. For which experiences shall I ask the children to recall parallel experiences from their lives?

8. Into which experiences would it be helpful to have the children project themselves?

Additional notes:

Form B: Lesson Plan

Story Title ______________________

Phrase discussion questions, indicate major points, and when important: indicate media, page/line numbers, activities.

Before the story:

During the story:

After the story:

4. Evaluating the Literature Experience

Following planning, three steps are added to those previously mentioned (page 110) to complete the process of gaining the competencies involved in this unit.

4) Teach the lesson while recording it on audiotape. At a later date, you will use audiotape only occasionally to check on specific issues. During training, it is used each time to provide immediate feedback for every stage of proficiency.

5) Listen to the audiotape while watching your plan and the story text unfold. You can gain:

an awareness of deviations from your original plan,

a careful examination of children's responses, as well as

new options for discussion or activities that had not occurred to you before.

Based on hearing the tape, insert any modifications into the lesson as taught in contrast to the lesson as planned. Do this with red ink or another equally distinctive medium that can be readily seen. Thus:

Imagine that Madeline had ~~mumps~~ measles ←(substitution)
instead of an operation. What
might have been different?

~~Illustrate each idea~~ ←(deletion)

Discuss while the teacher re- ←(addition)
cords the ideas, and illustrate
ideas in whatever media desired.
Culminate project with a dramatization

For modifications not listed in this sample, use any common-sense, easily interpreted means of showing the changes made upon your prior plan. The goal is an easily understood system for you and anyone with whom you discuss your plans.

6) Complete the self-assessment questions, Form C (page 116). This process in intended to aid the training by focusing thought immediately afterward on the lesson and evaluating in relation to future improvements. The questions collect such information as:

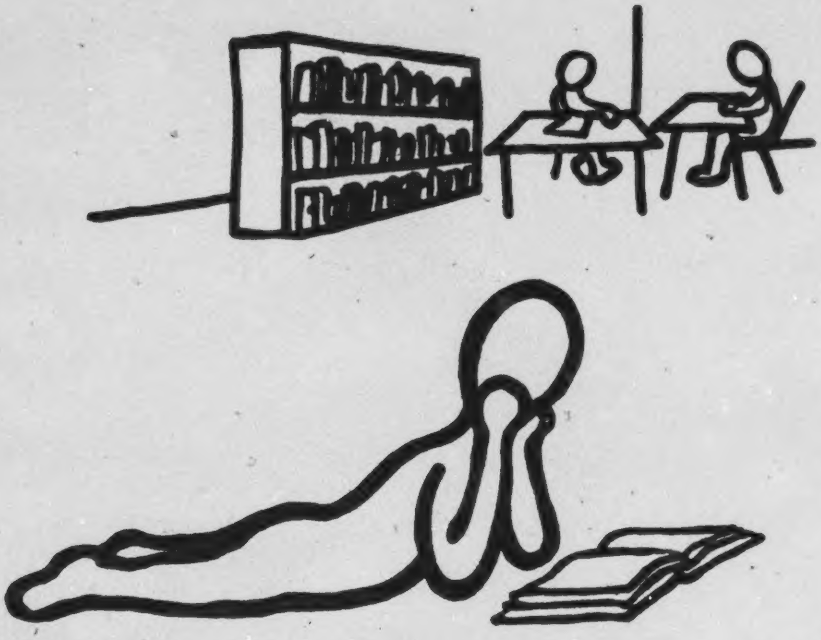
Were the guidelines fulfilled, and how were they fulfilled?

Are any improvements recommended?

What changes were made spontaneously?

Were those changes justified?

This assessment is intended to lead to improvements in this particular plan for future use, and, more importantly, to improvements in teaching techniques in general, thus facilitating a rich literature experience for children.



ACTIVITY 30: Self-Assessment of a Lesson

1. Read Form C: Self-Assessment.

2. With a partner, discuss what information you gained from this task that you would not otherwise have.

3. Using your lesson plan from The Turnip, and your audiotape of your reading, make the appropriate entries on the Self-Assessment form, Questions 1-7.

4. For purposes of this task only, number those changes, so they can be referred to. In the empty space on the reverse side of Form C, write the possible reasons for those changes you cited. (E.g., deletion of three instances for making predictions. Reason: the earlier prediction opportunities revealed that this activity was too difficult for this group of children.)

5. Think about what you would do differently (if anything) if you were to try this lesson again. Enter these comments in Question 8.

Form C: Self-Assessment

Story Title ______________________

After teaching the lesson:

A. With red ink, indicate any deviations from the lesson as taught that differ from the lesson as planned.
Describe here any additional changes NOT convenient to insert into the prior lesson plan.

B. Use the modified lesson as taught to answer the questions below, thereby offering the exact means of satisfying each guideline.

Guideline I

1. What background concepts were discussed?

Guideline II

2. What purpose for listening was set up?

Guideline III

3. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to make predictions?

4. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to supply closure?

5. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

6. For which experiences were listeners asked to recall parallel experiences from their lives? In what media?

7. Into which experiences were listeners asked to project themselves? In what media?

8. If I were to do this lesson again, I would make these changes:

9. Would I use this story again with the same children? If so, why would I? Would I make any changes?

5. Independent Application

To begin applying the principles in this unit to your own independent planning, you will work through the same stages just observed in the models, Madeline and The Turnip. Three story titles will be offered. All three texts are to be read, so that you can choose the one best suited to your present situation. You then begin the same process described above. For each of the six steps you can compare your concrete ideas with those of peers. Again, it is not a matter of right/wrong distinctions or any one plan being regarded a perfect model. Instead, you are attempting to match the "spirit" of the guidelines, which you should better understand through the concrete examples of actual stories. Use the sample models in ways you think will help you become independent and confident in using the guidelines on your own.

Three different experiences are planned to let you apply the guidelines and teach a lesson. Three books will be offered each time; you can choose the one best suited to your situation. A worksheet is provided for you to track your steps through each story.

ACTIVITY 31: Independent Application No. 1

Story ________________

Title ________________ Author ________________

☐ 1. Read the story text.

☐ 2. Write the pre-plan.

☐ 3. Design the lesson plan.

☐ 4. Teach the lesson while taping.

☐ 5. Insert modifications on lesson plan.

☐ 6. Complete self-assessment.

(name) ____ (date) ________________

Form A: Pre-Planning

Story Title ____________________

Jot notes in answer to these questions:

1. What is the theme of the story?

Guideline I

2. What are the important background concepts?

Guideline II

3. What are some possible purposes for listening?

Guideline III

4. In what instances could listeners make predictions?

5. Listeners supply closure?

6. Offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

7. For which experiences shall I ask the children to recall parallel experiences from their lives?

8. Into which experiences would it be helpful to have the children project themselves?

Additional notes:

Form B: Lesson Plan

Story Title ________________________

Phrase discussion questions, indicate major points, and when important: indicate media, page/line numbers, activities.

Before the story:

During the story:

After the story:

Form C: Self-Assessment

Story Title ______________________

After teaching the lesson:

A. With red ink, indicate any deviations from the lesson as taught that differ from the lesson as planned. Describe here any additional changes NOT convenient to insert into the prior lesson plan.

B. Use the modified lesson as taught to answer the questions below, thereby offering the exact means of satisfying each guideline.

Guideline I

1. What background concepts were discussed?

Guideline II

2. What purpose for listening was set up?

Guideline III

3. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to make predictions?

4. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to supply closure?

5. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

6. For which experiences were listeners asked to recall parallel experiences from their lives? In what media?

7. Into which experiences were listeners asked to project themselves? In what media?

8. If I were to do this lesson again, I would make these changes:

9. Would I use this story again with the same children? If so, why would I? Would I make any changes?

ACTIVITY 32: Independent Application No. 2

Story________________

Title________________ Author________________

☐ 1. Read the story text.

☐ 2. Write the pre-plan.

☐ 3. Design the lesson plan.

☐ 4. Teach the lesson while taping.

☐ 5. Insert modifications on lesson plan.

☐ 6. Complete self-assessment.

(name)____ (date) ________________

Form A: Pre-Planning

Story Title ____________________

Jot notes in answer to these questions:

1. What is the theme of the story?

Guideline I

2. What are the important background concepts?

Guideline II

3. What are some possible purposes for listening?

Guideline III

4. In what instances could listeners make predictions?

5. Listeners supply closure?

6. Offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

7. For which experiences shall I ask the children to recall parallel experiences from their lives?

8. Into which experiences would it be helpful to have the children project themselves?

Additional notes:

Form B: Lesson Plan

Story Title ______________________

Phrase discussion questions, indicate major points, and when important: indicate media, page/ line numbers, activities.

Before the story:

During the story:

After the story:

Form C: Self-Assessment

Story Title________________________

After teaching the lesson:

A. With red ink, indicate any deviations from the lesson as taught that differ from the lesson as planned. Describe here any additional changes NOT convenient to insert into the prior lesson plan.

B. Use the modified lesson as taught to answer the questions below, thereby offering the exact means of satisfying each guideline.

Guideline I

1. What background concepts were discussed?

Guideline II

2. What purpose for listening was set up?

Guideline III

3. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to make predictions?

4. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to supply closure?

5. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

6. For which experiences were listeners asked to recall parallel experiences from their lives? In what media?

7. Into which experiences were listeners asked to project themselves? In what media?

8. If I were to do this lesson again, I would make these changes:

9. Would I use this story again with the same children? If so, why would I? Would I make any changes?

ACTIVITY 33: Independent Application No. 3

Story________________

Title________________ Author________________

☐ 1. Read the story text.

☐ 2. Write the pre-plan.

☐ 3. Design the lesson plan.

☐ 4. Teach the lesson while taping.

☐ 5. Insert modifications on lesson plan.

☐ 6. Complete self-assessment.

(name)________________________________ (date)________________

Form A: Pre-Planning

Story Title ________________

Jot notes in answer to these questions:

1. What is the theme of the story?

Guideline I

2. What are the important background concepts?

Guideline II

3. What are some possible purposes for listening?

Guideline III

4. In what instances could listeners make predictions?

5. Listeners supply closure?

6. Offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

7. For which experiences shall I ask the children to recall parallel experiences from their lives?

8. Into which experiences would it be helpful to have the children project themselves?

Additional notes:

Form B: Lesson Plan

Story Title ______________________

Phrase discussion questions, indicate major points, and when important: indicate media, page/line numbers, activities.

Before the story:

During the story:

After the story:

Form C: Self-Assessment

Story Title ______________________

After teaching the lesson:

A. With red ink, indicate any deviations from the lesson as taught that differ from the lesson as planned. Describe here any additional changes NOT convenient to insert into the prior lesson plan.

B. Use the modified lesson as taught to answer the questions below, thereby offering the exact means of satisfying each guideline.

Guideline I

1. What background concepts were discussed?

Guideline II

2. What purpose for listening was set up?

Guideline III

3. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to make predictions?

4. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to supply closure?

5. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

6. For which experiences were listeners asked to recall parallel experiences from their lives? In what media?

7. Into which experiences were listeners asked to project themselves? In what media?

8. If I were to do this lesson again, I would make these changes:

9. Would I use this story again with the same children? If so, why would I? Would I make any changes?

CONCLUSION

INTEGRATION AND FURTHER APPLICATION

We now complete the cycle for your experience as a learner in this unit. The significance of these activities and investment of time and self can be known only when you actually use them for yourself in a "nonassigned" way.

The following tasks are designed to aid this transition into independent application of your learning experience. It is intended to help you answer for yourself: What do I now have? What do I intend to do with it? One additional task helps you to assess at a later date where you are in relation to this topic.

ACTIVITY 34: Integrating what was Learned

1. Without referring to the same task earlier in this unit, think about why you like to read stories to children: Jot your reasons here.

   Now look back to Activity 1 and read your responses to this same question prior to your work in the unit.
   How are your responses similar?

   How are your responses different?

   Comment on comparing your two sets of responses:

2. Think back to the Saroyan story about Jim Davy and his first day of school (Activity 2).

   In what ways were the Guidelines for Facilitating Literature Experiences observed in that session with you, as an adult learner?

   In what way did the use of those guidelines enhance the experience for you?

ACTIVITY 35: Applying the Facilitating Guidelines to the Learning process in this unit

This activity is intended to aid you in seeing how the Guidelines for Facilitating Literature Experiences have broader application than just for literature and/or just for children. What adult habits have they fostered in you?

1. Look back over the unit briefly and observe how the content was presented in general, and remind yourself of what you were asked to do. (If you wish, your instructor will guide you through this review, or you may do it for yourself. Careful rereading of the guideline Summary section with "further notes" (pages 101-102) is particilarly advisable at this point.

2. What indicators can you cite where each of the guidelines was observed in the learning process that you experienced:

   a. In what way(s) was the background you brought to the topic assessed before moving forward?

   b. In what instances were you given a focus or purpose for listening, reading, observing, attending?

   c. In what instances were you encouraged to supply possible solutions, ideas, alternatives before the author's point of view was expressed?

   d. In what ways were you given opportunities to apply the learnings and generalizations to your own situation in which you intend to use these ideas?

   e. In what ways were you given opportunities to understand and appreciate the "theme" of what literature experiences for children are all about?

ACTIVITY 36: Demonstrating the Competencies learned in this unit

At this time, you are asked to demonstrate your use of the competencies:

1. Choose which of the Eugene Fern books (offered by your instructor) seems to best fit the age level you will plan for and read to.
2. Assess the book on the Guidelines for Literature Selection forms.
3. Construct a Pre-Plan for the book (Form A).
4. Develop a Lesson Plan for the book (Form B).
5. Write a description of the children you plan to read the book to. Cover the issues you addressed in "Relevance to My Children," on the Literature Selection form.
6. Teach your Lesson Plan while audio-taping the entire session.
7. Self-assess the lesson (Form C).
8. Gather the evidence of all the above items, plus the audiotape and the book, and turn them in to your instructor under one cover, well labelled.
9. Arrange for a conference regarding this experience with this learning unit.

ACTIVITY 37: Summarizing Learnings

Think back over this entire training process. You may have learned some new content. You may have learned some new methods to enhance learning. You may have learned something new about yourself or others. What are three or more of the most significant things you feel you have learned from this experience? What do you now have?

ACTIVITY 38: Planning for using these Competencies

We have all had experiences that were interesting at the time, but were soon "stored on the shelf" once we resumed our daily routine; they resulted in what appeared to be very little impact. Think about the skills you have learned in this unit. You may feel that you have learned very different things from what the author originally intended. Good! Whatever you have learned, make a plan for using it. What can you do immediately in your work with children that will result from what you think you have gained here? Write your plan below. Be specific. Include approximate time lines. What will I do with what I have?

ACTIVITY 39: Long-term use of the Competencies Learned

This activity is intended to be used perhaps six months after completion of the learning unit. Your instructor may set a due date.

I have used the literature unit criteria for approximately:

1-10 ☐ lessons

10-25 ☐ lessons

25+ ☐ lessons

I have now

☐ developed my own guidelines

☐ made modifications in the guidelines. These are described below:

(Date)______________________________

(Signature)________________________

(Site)______________________________

APPENDIX A

The First Day of School

by William Saroyan

He was a little boy named Jim, the first and only child of Dr. Louis Davy, 717 Mattei Building, and it was his first day at school. His father was French, a small heavy-set man of forty whose boyhood had been full of poverty and unhappiness and ambition. His mother was dead: she died when Jim was born, and the only woman he knew intimately was Amy, the Swedish housekeeper.

It was Amy who dressed him in his Sunday clothes, and took him to school. Jim liked Amy, but he didn't like her for taking him to school. He told her so. All the way to school he told her so.

I don't like you, he said. I don't like you any more.

I like *you*, the housekeeper said.

Then why are you taking me to school? he said.

He had taken walks with Amy before, once all the way to the Court House Park for the Sunday afternoon band concert, but this walk to school was different.

What for? he said.

Everybody must go to school, the housekeeper said.

Did you go to school? he said.

No, said Amy.

Then why do I have to go? he said.

You will like it, said the housekeeper.

He walked on with her in silence, holding her hand. I don't like you, he said. I don't like you any more.

I like you, said Amy.

Then why are you taking me to school? he said again.

Why?

The housekeeper knew how frightened a little boy could be about going to school.

You will like it, she said. I think you will sing songs and play games.

I don't want to, he said.

I will come and get you every afternoon, she said.

I don't like you, he told her again.

She felt very unhappy about the little boy going to school, but she knew that he would have to go.

The school building was very ugly to her and to the boy. She didn't like the way it made her feel, and going up the steps with him she wished he didn't have to go to school. The halls and rooms scared her, and him, and the smell of the place too. And he didn't like Mr. Barber, the principal.

Amy despised Mr. Barber.

What is the name of your son? Mr. Barber said.

This is Dr. Louis Davy's son, said

Amy. His name is Jim. I am Dr. Davy's housekeeper.

James? said Mr. Barber.

Not James, said Amy, just Jim.

All right, said Mr. Barber. Any middle name?

No, said Amy. He is too small for a middle name. Just Jim Davy.

All right, said Mr. Barber. We'll try him out in the first grade. If he doesn't get along all right we'll try him out in kindergarten.

Dr. Davy said to start him in the first grade, said Amy. Not kindergarten.

All right, said Mr Barber.

The housekeeper knew how frightened the little boy was, sitting on the chair, and she tried to let him know how much she loved him and how sorry she was about everything. She wanted to say something fine to him about everything, but she couldn't say anything, and she was very proud of the nice way he got down from the chair and stood beside Mr. Barber, waiting to go with him to a classroom.

On the way home she was so proud of him she began to cry.

Miss Binney, the teacher of the first grade, was an old lady who was all dried out. The room was full of little boys and girls. School smelled strange and sad. He sat at a desk and listened carefully.

He heard some of the names: *Charles, Ernest, Alvin, Norman, Betty, Hannah, Juliet, Viola, Polly.*

He listened carefully and heard Miss Binney say, Hannah Winter, what are you chewing? And he saw Hannah Winter blush. He liked Hannah Winter right from the beginning.

Gum, said Hannah.

Put it in the waste-basket, said Miss Binney.

He saw the little girl walk to the front of the class, take the gum from her mouth, and drop it into the waste-basket.

And he heard Miss Binney say, Ernest Gaskin, what are *you* chewing?

Gum, said Ernest.

And he liked Ernest Gaskin too.

They met in the schoolyard, and Ernest taught him a few jokes.

Amy was in the hall when school ended. She was sullen and angry at everybody until she saw the little boy. She was amazed that he wasn't changed, that he wasn't hurt, or perhaps utterly unalive, murdered. The school and everything about it frightened her very much. She took his hand and walked out of the building with him, feeling angry and proud.

Jim said, What comes after twenty-nine?

Thirty, said Amy.

Your face is dirty, he said.

His father was very quiet at the suppertable.

What comes after twenty-nine? the boy said.

Thirty, said his father.

Your face is dirty, he said.

In the morning he asked his father for a nickel.

What do you want a nickel for? his father said.

Gum, he said.

His father gave him a nickel and on the way to school he stopped at Mrs. Riley's store and bought a package of Spearmint.

Do you want a piece? he asked Amy.

Do you want to give me a piece? the housekeeper said.

Jim thought about it a moment, and them he said, Yes.

Do you like me? said the housekeeper.

I like you, said Jim. Do you like me?

Yes, said the housekeeper.

Do you like school?

Jim didn't know for sure, but he knew he liked the part about gum. And Hannah Winter. And Ernest Gaskin.

I don't know, he said.

Do you sing? asked the housekeeper.

No, we don't sing, he said.

Do you play games? she said.

Not in the school, he said. In the yard we do.

He liked the part about gum very much.

Miss Binney said, Jim Davy, what are you *chewing*?

Ha ha ha, he thought.

Gum, he said.

He walked to the waste-paper basket and back to his seat, and Hannah Winter saw him, and Ernest Gaskin too. That was the best part of school.

It began to grow too.

Ernest Gaskin, he shouted in the schoolyard, *what* are you *chewing*?

Raw elephant meat, said Ernest Gaskin. Jim Davy, what are *you* chewing?

Jim tried to think of something very funny to be chewing, but he couldn't.

Gum, he said, and Ernest Gaskin laughed louder than Jim laughed when Ernest Gaskin said raw elephant meat.

It was funny no matter what you said.

Going back to the classroom Jim saw Hannah Winter in the hall.

Hannah Winter, he said, *what in the world* are you *chewing*?

The little girl was startled. She wanted to say something nice that would honestly show how nice she felt about having Jim say her name and ask her the funny question, making fun of school, but she couldn't think of anthing that nice to say because they were almost in the room and there wasn't time enough.

Tutti-frutti, she said with desperate haste.

It seemed to Jim he had never before heard such a glorious word, and he kept repeating the word to himself all day.

Tutti-frutti, he said to Amy on the way home.

Amy Larson, he said, *what, are, you,* chewing?

He told his father all about it at the supper table.

He said, Once there was a hill.
On the hill there was a mill.
Under the mill there was a walk.
Under the walk there was a key.
What is it?

I don't know, his father said. What is it?

Milwaukee, said the boy.

The housekeeper was delighted.

Mill. Walk. Key, Jim said.

Tutti-frutti.

What's that? said his father.

Gum, he said. The kind Hannah Winter chews.

Who's Hannah Winter? said his father.

She's in my room, he said.

Oh, said his father.

After supper he sat on the floor with the small red and blue and yellow top that hummed while it spinned. It was all right, he guessed. It was still very sad, but the gum part of it was very funny and the Hannah Winter part very nice. Raw elephant meat, he thought with great inward delight.

Raw elephant meat, he said aloud to his father who was reading the evening paper. His father folded the paper and sat on the floor beside him. The housekeeper saw them together on the floor and for some reason tears came to her eyes.

APPENDIX B

Knowing Your Students

To deal effectively with Guideline I, a teacher must know what background the listeners are bringing to the story. An experienced teacher, familiar with the community, age level, and particular children, may not feel a need for help with this type of information. Such a teacher may read the suggestions, but not find it necessary to devote time to the activities. Others may find it a helpful beginning to become acquainted with the 24-hour lives of the students.

1. Gain familiarity with the immediate neighborhood (stores, parks, community centers, restaurants, group functions) and learn some of the after-school and weekend activities.
2. Observe the community during the day with the children, for a "through their eyes and mouth" version. Take photos to use back in the classroom for thorough discussions and later reference. Be sure to photograph all areas/objects thought to be significant by the children, as well as those of your choice. Caption the photos with the children's labels and descriptions, in their own words.
3. Ask open-ended (not yes/no) questions, leading to descriptions, explanation of functions, relationships, etc.
4. Obtain information from the occasions where students are expressing feelings and ideas via any particular medium. Art expression is especially revealing in this way; as children talk about what they are drawing or painting, much can be learned about their perceptions and their oral means of expressing them. It would be necessary to know the particular children to determine if a certain incident could be recalled or would have to be imagined, so for purposes of training in this unit, that designation will have to remain arbitrary. That would mean that certain lessons for fantasy or role playing would be unnecessary for children who had already lived that particular experience. The opposite might also occur.
5. Use the many informal moments in the classroom to listen for "who the children are" and "where they are."

Some ways these various means of information gathering can be used to provide material for that "bridge" to the unknown:

. Children's answers to open-ended questions give the teacher explanations and labels in the children's own words. A teacher who uses those exact words (at least in the beginning) shows acceptance of the children's language, and increases the possibility of effective communication and understanding.

The photos of the local environment are available at all times for drawing comparisons for differences/similarities. Other AV media can be used in the same way: filmstrips, loops, films, slides.

Children all become resource people in their special areas of knowledge and experience. If the teacher is continually aware of the child's home life and the distinct features of the family, this information can be used to enrich and aid the learning of all the children.

APPENDIX C

Multiple-choice method for Learning the selection Guidelines

This section is offered as an alternative or additional means of understanding and becoming confident in using the guidelines for presenting children's literature. Three fables will be used as the vehicles throughout. In each case, the theme and four guidelines will be illustrated, via a multiple-choice process through which it is hoped the learner will become clearer on what is representative of that category, by also seeing what it is not. Use of the same stories for all examples should help to keep the plot itself subservient to the purpose of the activity. The fables were chosen not because they would be story content used with young children, but because:

a. they are more at an adult level, and appeal to the adult learner's maturity level in answering the questions,

b. they are so brief that the amount of text does not demand more time than it deserves, when merely serving as a vehicle for the activity.

These activities may be done in whatever fashion is most helpful to you: individually, with a partner, in a small group, etc. It might be helpful, as a follow-up and checking process, for you to write similar multiple-choice items for another learner.

1. To Determine the Theme of a Story

Ask yourself: Why did the author write this story? What was he/she telling listeners? This is not intended to be regarded as a moral (e.g., "you shouldn't tell lies"). It is a statement about humans and their world.

In the fables, on the following pages, you are asked to identify the theme of the story. To do so, select one response as the theme, or if two seem reasonable, rank them as first and second choices.

Task 1: "The Milkmaid and the Pail"

Patty, the milkmaid, was going to market carrying her milk in a pail on her head. As she went along she began figuring out what she would get for the milk. "I'll buy some chickens from Farmer Brown," said she, "and they will lay eggs each morning, which I will sell to the minister's wife. With the money that I get from the sale of these eggs I'll buy myself a new dress and hat; and when I go shopping, won't all the young men come up and speak to me! Polly Shaw will be so jealous; but I don't care. I shall just look at her and toss my head like this." As she spoke, she tossed her head back, the pail fell off it, and all the milk was spilt...So she had to go home and tell her mother what had happened. (Adapted from "The Milkmaid and Her Pail," The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature, Third Edition, 1971, 503.)

It would be helpful at this point to remind yourself of what the theme is not, as described in Theme Identification (page 85). Then select one (or two if necessary) of the following alternatives as your perception of the theme of this story:

a. What happened when a milkmaid became so entranced with her imagined success that she failed to concentrate on the immediate task necessary to achieving that success?

b. The milkmaid and her pail.

c. If you crow about your gains before they are actually realized, you may lose the opportunity you had.

d. A milkmaid causes a problem for herself when she least expects it.

Discuss your selection(s) with peers, explaining why the other responses are not your choices.

Task 2: "The Crow and the Pitcher"

The second fable is presented below with choices to determine a theme.

A crow, half-dead with thirst, came upon a pitcher which had once been full of water; but when the crow put his beak into the mouth of the pitcher he found that only very little water was left in it and that he could not reach far enough down to get at it. He tried, and he tried, but at last had to give up in despair. Then a thought came to him, and he took a rock and dropped in into the pitcher. Then he took another rock and dropped that into the pitcher. Then he took another rock and dropped that into the pitcher. Then he took another rock and dropped that into the pitcher. Then he took another rock and dropped that into the pitcher. Then he took another rock and dropped that into the pitcher. At last, at last, he saw the water raising up near him; and after putting in a few more rocks he was able to quench his thirst and save his life. (adapted from "The Crow and the Pitcher," The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature, Third Edition, 1971, p. 502.)

Select one (or two) of the following alternatives as your perception of the theme of this story:

a. A crow has to figure out how to get water to save his life.

b. A seemingly large task can be accomplished by perseverance at small pieces of the task.

c. The crow and the pitcher.

d. A crow, dying of thirst, cleverly figures out how to get the small amount of water in the bottom of a pitcher.

Task 3: "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing"

The last fable and response alternatives follow:

A wolf found great difficulty in getting at the sheep because the shepherd and his dogs watched so carefully, but one day the wolf found the skin of a sheep that had been killed, so he put it on over his own fur and strolled down among the sheep. The lamb that belonged to the sheep whose skin the wolf was wearing began to follow the wolf in the sheep's clothing; so, leading the lamb further away, he soom made a meal off her, and for some time he succeeded in tricking the sheep, and enjoying hearty meals. (adapted from "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing," The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature, Third Edition, 1971, p. 504.)

Select one of the following alternatives as your perception of the theme of this story.

a. Appearances cannot be accepted at face value.

b. The wolf in the appearance of a sheep.

c. A wolf wears the coat of a shorn sheep and tricks lambs to become his victims.

d. A wolf has a plan to capture innocent lambs.

2. To Determine Satisfaction of Guideline I

Ask yourself: What, if any, major background of experience is important to understanding and appreciating the theme (determined above)? The latter half of this statement considerably narrows the possibilities to attend to. There are probably many areas of background knowledge that would be helpful to understanding the literal plot in general. This is not to diminish the importance of the literal plot, but experience tells us that in sharing a story with children, we have often in the past (a) spent too much time priming the listeners for topics to come up in the story, when we could have let the story do it, or (b) spent time on a background concept that is quite insignificant as far as contributing toward the larger message of the story. Both are inefficient uses of time and may, in fact, be distracting to the more universal ideas to be gained. (By our leadership, children can't see the forest for the trees.) This does not negate discussion of such issues when initiated by the children.

Task 1-1: "Milkmaid" (refer to story already introduced on page 153)

Which of the following would you choose as satisfaction of this guideline:

a. "What does jealous mean?

b. "What does your milk come in?"

c. "What would happen if you were balancing something on top of your head and then suddenly tipped your head?"

d. "Where do eggs come from?"

If possible or desirable, discuss your selection with peers and explain why you did not select the other options.

Task 2-1: "Crow" (refer to story already introduced on page 154)

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

a. "How do you feel when you are very thirsty?"

b. "Is a rock heavy or light?"

c. "What is a pitcher?"

d. "How could you get water out of the bottom of a pitcher, if you had to do it with no hands?"

Task 3-1: "Wolf" (refer to story already introduced on page 155)

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

a. "What does strolled mean?"

b. "This story is called 'The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing.' A shepherd is in it. What does a shepherd do?"

c. "If you were a lamb, how would you protect yourself from being eaten by a wolf?"

d. "This story is called 'The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing.' How do wolves and sheep get along together?"

3. To Determine Satisfaction of Guideline II

Ask yourself (in terms of the selection of an issue for Guideline I): What is an appropriate question to provide a focus for listening and to launch listeners directly into the story? Keep in mind the theme when making this selection, so discussion emphasis always enhances that understanding. This question must keep the learners foremost in mind, as it is not intended to be a "directed-thinking," narrowing kind of aid. It should instead help to build the habit of posing a question of all oral and printed matter: "What do I expect to get from this?"

Task 1-II: "Milkmaid"

Which of the following would you choose as satisfaction of Guideline II?

a. "Listen to what happens when a girl forgets she is carrying on her head something that spills."

b. "Listen to see what this girl, Patty, is carrying on her head."

c. "Listen to see how this girl, Patty, carries the milk she has, and what happens."

d. "Listen to see what this girl will buy when she gets some money from selling the milk."

Task 2-II: "Crow"

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

a. "Listen to see what a crow does when he cannot get water from the bottom of a pitcher."

b. "Listen to see what happens when someone is very thirsty in this story."

c. "Listen to see what the word despair means (if you don't already know)."

d. "Listen to see what clever thing the crow does with rocks in this story."

Task 3-II: "Wolf"

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

a. "In this story find out what a shepherd does."

b. "In this story find out what happens when a wolf invents a good plan for catching and eating sheep."

c. "This story is called 'The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing.' What could be meant by the Sheep's Clothing....Listen to find out what the author says."

d. "In this story called 'The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing,' listen to see how the wolf manages to be able to wear the coat of a sheep."

4. To Determine Satisfaction of Guideline III

Ask yourself: At what points in the story is there sufficient information for the listener, so he/she could join in the telling of the story by closing sentences and predicting the next events? And what situations or events (relating to them) lend themselves to explanations by listeners (since no explanation is offered in the text) or development of alternative behaviors for the same situation?

Such options are to be used only as the listeners spontaneously enjoy the participation, but it is helpful to be aware of these possibilities for use when appropriate. The main intent is to give listeners much credit for their present knowledge and logical thinking, and to provide them with as active a role as possible to make the experience "theirs" rather than simply being a passive audience. Again, a habit is being promoted: When one is receiving oral or written language, anticipation of upcoming words, ideas, etc., is natural and enhances understanding and develops ownership of ideas.

Task 1-III: "Milkmaid"

Which of the following would you select as satisfaction of Guideline III?

Prediction

a. "...my head like this." "What happened?"

b. "...she would get for the milk." "What do you think she will buy?"

c. "...go home and" "Do what?"

d. "...speak to me." "What might they say?"

Closure

a. "carrying her milk in a ...(pail)"

b. "Polly Shaw will be...(jealous)"

c. "...home and tell...(her mother)"

d. "...and they will lay (eggs)"

Alternatives/Explanations

a. "What could she buy besides a dress and hat?"

b. "What could she do now besides just tell her mother?"

c. "Why would Polly Shaw be jealous?"

d. "What other things does one toss?"

Task 2-III: "Crow"

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

Prediction

a. "...get at it." "What might he do?"

b. "...pitcher he found" "What did he find?"

c. "...and save his..." "Save his what?"

d. "...in despair." "What does despair mean?"

Closure

a. "...he took a (rock)"

b. "came upon a (pitcher)"

c. "...at last, at last he saw (the water rising)"

d. "...and save his (life)"

Alternatives/Explanations

a. "Why did the crow drop rocks into the pitcher?"

b. "Why didn't the crow find something bigger than small rocks, so it would go faster?"

c. "Why couldn't the crow reach the water in the pitcher?"

d. "What other solutions might you have thought of to try?"

Task 3-III: "Wolf"

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

Prediction

a. "...in getting at the sheep." "Why did he have trouble?"

b. "...he soon..." "Did what?"

c. "...wolf was wearing, began to." "Do what"

d. "...watched so carefully." "What will he decide to do?"

Closure

a. "one day the wolf found the (skin)"

b. "wolf was wearing, began to (follow)..."

c. "He soon made a (meal)"

Alternatives/Explanations

a. "How might the sheep have fooled the wolf in the same way the wolf fooled the sheep?"

b. "What else could the wolf have done with the lamb that he was able to get to follow him?"

c. "How do you think the shepherd and his dogs usually did such a good job of protecting the sheep?"

d. "What did the wolf do with the sheep skin he found?"

5. To Determine Satisfaction of Guideline IV

Ask yourself: How could the theme of this story become more meaningful to the daily lives of these listeners? Without stating the theme for them, ask a question that calls for the listener to transfer the learning, insight, or message from the story character to himself or herself. This may still mean that most or all listeners will deal directly with the literal plot and not see a larger, more generalizable message. Good. It should not be forced. The opportunity continues to be offered, however, so another habit is building: How does this relate to me? What role or relationship does it have to my life experience? What does any story have to do with me?

Task 1-IV: "Milkmaid"

Which of the following would you select as satisfaction of Guideline IV?

a. "Each of you can draw how you would carry the pail of milk."

b. "What would you buy with the money?"

c. "Think about how you would act in this story? How you would not act and how you would."

d. "Think about how you would do better than the milkmaid did."

Task 2-IV: "Crow"

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

a. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you carried many rocks to play with or to make something with. What did you play or make?"

b. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you have tried or have solved a big problem by doing something like what the crow did?"

c. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you wanted a drink and what you did about it?"

d. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you have seen a bird do a trick in a show?"

Task 3-IV: "Wolf"

Which of these items would comply with this guideline?

a. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you were to guard something but you let it get away."

b. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you had to think of a plan to get something you wanted very much. Tell about it: what it was and whether it worked.

c. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you found something that turned out to be different from what you first thought it was. What did it seem like? What was it really? How did you discover this?"

d. "Think of a time or pretend a time when you wore a costume and pretended to be something you are not. How did it feel? Who was fooled by your costume?"

Note:

If you should still feel the need for more practice of this kind, meet with your instructor and set up a system with the instructor or peers to develop more such tasks, to be used until you feel comfortable using the guidelines.

ADDITIONAL PLANNING FORMS

Title: ____________________

Author: ____________________

Guidelines for Selecting Literature for "Literature Plus Response" Sessions

	Yes	Partial	No
I. The Story			
A. Are the events based on cause/effect relationships?			
B. Are the behaviors of the characters and the situations compatible with those they represent?			
C. Do the ideas have universal implications that evolve naturally in the story?			
D. Does the story represent a mutually respectful world view of people?			
II. The Author/Illustrator's Presentation			
A. Is the language appropriate to the subject matter?			
B. Do the illustrations* play an appropriate and important role?			
C. Does the overall format (page layout, size, use of pictures and color, etc.) enhance the story?			
III. Relevance to My Students			
A.			
B.			
C.			

*Picture books only.

Form A: Pre-Planning

Story Title __________________

Jot notes in answer to these questions:

1. What is the theme of the story?

Guideline I

2. What are the important background concepts?

Guideline II

3. What are some possible purposes for listening?

Guideline III

4. In what instances could listeners make predictions?

5. Listeners supply closure?

6. Offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

7. For which experiences shall I ask the children to recall parallel experiences from their lives?

8. Into which experiences would it be helpful to have the children project themselves?

Additional notes:

Form B: Lesson Plan

Story Title ____________________

Phrase discussion questions, indicate major points, and when important: indicate media, page/line numbers, activities.

Before the story:

During the story:

After the story:

Form C: Self-Assessment

Story Title____________________

After teaching the lesson:

A. With red ink, indicate any deviations from the lesson as taught that differ from the lesson as planned.
Describe here any additional changes NOT convenient to insert into the prior lesson plan.

B. Use the modified lesson as taught to answer the questions below, thereby offering the exact means of satisfying each guideline.

Guideline I

1. What background concepts were discussed?

Guideline II

2. What purpose for listening was set up?

Guideline III

3. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to make predictions?

4. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to supply closure?

5. In what instances did listeners have opportunities to offer alternative behaviors, explanations?

Guideline IV

6. For which experiences were listeners asked to recall parallel experiences from their lives? In what media?

7. Into which experiences were listeners asked to project themselves? In what media?

8. If I were to do this lesson again, I would make these changes:

9. Would I use this story again with the same children? If so, why would I? Would I make any changes?

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